

YANDRO

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DECEMBER 76

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The stamp over there is our "Merry Christmas" greeting. As armchair naturalists, we support the National Wildlife Federation, 1412 16th. St. NW, Washington, DC 20036. The stamp is a boost for them, as well as a seasonal greeting. (We did this once before, but it's too much work to try every year....)



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ARTWORK

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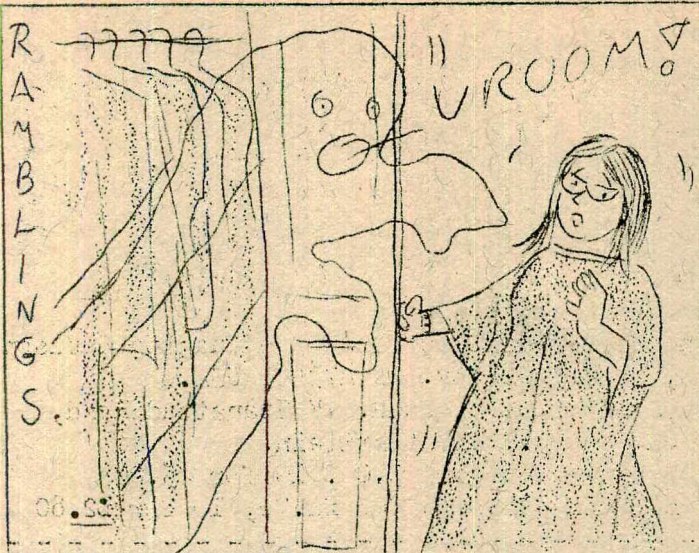
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In our last episode (remember way back then? probably not. never mind), Kay Anderson was visiting and taking in the exotic sights and smells of mysterious downtown rural Indiana and points west as far as Kansas City. That all went very well, we thought, and a good time at MidAmeriCon was had by all and the car didn't collapse (it groaned a lot, though) and the plane didn't crash taking her back to the West Coast (got hit by lightning after it landed, though, and blew all its electrical circuits) and no problems there. There is a certain amount of overall wear and tear involved in jaunting that far to a con, of course. Our jaunt was made much, much easier by the

ineffable hospitality of the incomparable Leigh and Norb Couch, thank you very much. Without their kindness (one among many kindnesses of theirs) our trip would have been far more exhausting and less pleasurable. It was a good one.

There are other pertinent details in Rumbings, but I'll note a few in passing of my own impressions. Outside of having a lousy room tv and no closed circuit link, the room was better than many others I've endured at cons. It had additional charms, in fact: a futuristic glowing ceiling panel in the bathroom -- light never went out and you had to lock off the john to shut out the light and get any sleep; and a closet monster (Sesame Street can keep its Cookie Monster; ours was more fannish) which set up a ghostly Vrooom! any time the door was opened...a guaranteed visiting fan surpiser. Our room was conveniently located a few doors from the pool, but the pool was too cold, so I didn't risk chilblains more than once. I risked my previously good night vision at the Meet the Authors Party, but was glad to eventually escape to the brilliant 150 watts of our nearby room and be able to see something once more.

The filk sings were good filk sings, not great, but good, and the audiences were splendid and tremendous credit must go to the Trimble...who generously donated the use of the Art Show anteroom for the gathering. The rent a fuzz were bemused but cooperative, the acoustics were pretty fair, the company was great, and all in all the Trimble are true patrons of all the arts and all filkers owe them much thanks not only for a fine art show (but better lighting arrangements, committee people, next time, please?) but a successful con full of singing. The audiences were generally magnificent -- attentive, receptive to experiments, and fantastically loyal and patient; at one point there were faithful listeners waiting for the singers forty-five minutes before any of the singers arrived. Now that's dedication enough to make a filker sprain hiser tonsils, and we thank you. Good filksings demand professional listeners, and MidAmeriCon had its full quota:

It was one of those cons full of so many good little moments you can't list them all. I won't try. To all those I met -- hope you enjoyed it too. And hope you were lucky enough not to have to cold turkey, but could let the con fever damp down gradually as we did. (We even met some fans along the interstate on the way back, adding to the effect.) And Kay didn't have to enplane until the following Saturday. Then it was all over, probably for several years. We shot our wad, but it was worth it. We must do that again some time.

One final note. I was especially sorry the film committee couldn't get STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN, which I've only seen three times, all at the same theatre, in one glorious day of parking in a movie house and having to be forcibly removed after the last reel ended for the third time. I'd hoped to relive the experience, but it was not to be.

In compensation, we got a print of THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, which I have seen a number of times on tv since the time I originally saw it in a theatre (about twenty or more times over a three-five day period; as often as my allowance permitted). The film is a special favorite of Kay and I, but we went with qualms after suffering thru the difficulties with THE LEGEND OF HILLBILLY JOHN film (details in Rumbblings). However Kay talked with the Projectionist and found this was to be a pristine print. That meant nothing to me, but the effect was exactly that of sitting in that theatre seat, back in the 50s, when the film was newly released, and watching it roll. Kay commented glowingly on the film's quality, so I guess it was a pristine print, and thank you, KC committee for that bit of nostalgia brought to life. I'm glad to see that film being properly appreciated, as I always have appreciated it.

Now, also several installments ago in these pages I may have mentioned a Babylonian romantic epic of sorts. That is still in the works. It is contracted for expansion. Lots of expansion. Double, at least, the wordage. I shall be doing the heaviest part of the work on it during January and February. Somahow it is a well arranged thing to be working on a novel set in the steamy pre-Biblical Fertile Crescent during the coldest months of a Midwestern winter. How did I manage that? I assure you, Bob Tucker, it was a lot more than the work of a moment and took a hard pedaling agent and a lot of confusion. I'll let you know how it comes out and maybe even let you buy a copy of the finished product.

I also completed a novel for Laser, but how that one will come out I don't, at the moment, know. Laser is suspending publication for evaluating the line's progress, come January. My work on the book is done. Now comes the wait and watch period. I'll keep you posted on that one, too.

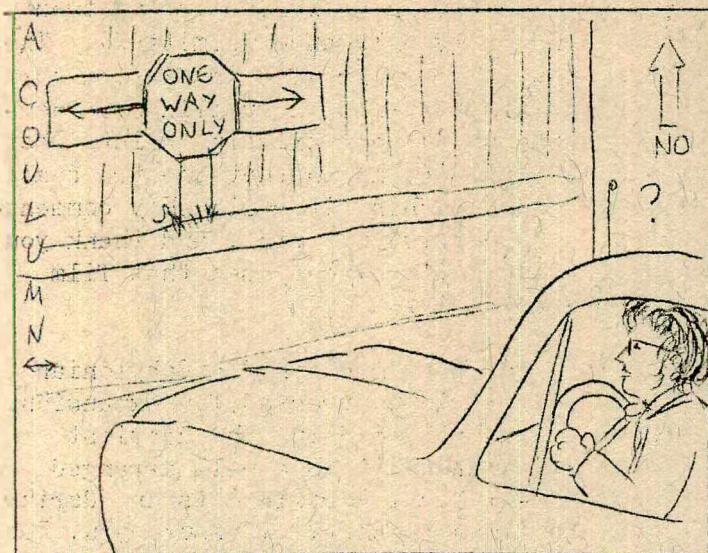
In consequence of all this hard writing, some of you may notice a subtle difference in typeface. Though possibly not. I notice a subtle difference -- though it's one of relationship, not brand. My own galloping Olympia threw a shoe in the finishing stages of the Laser manuscript. It's currently at the farrier's, and this is a big brother model to that one. The type face is basically the same, but the platen is somewhat different. And of course most of Yandro is typed on the IBM Model B which George Scithers bestowed upon us. (Its T key is about to throw its shoe, as gimlet eyed fans will notice; we'll take care of that realsoonnow.)

I would be tempted to say the typer breaking was an omen of better things to come, but I'm afraid to. We can't afford omens. So far we've had near omens, but not real ones. Real ones wait until just as good news and/or money is about to arrive; then the car throws a rod or the refrigerator eats its innards and spews ooky smelling water all over the floor or the kitchen range fries its thermostat or the television knob comes off in your hand, leaving you permanently stuck on a channel which features nothing but old Blondie episodes. That's an omen. A near omen is the car quitting because of condensation in the gas line, but then re-starting and limping as far as a filling station, where you can juice up with ethyl and cure the problem. Or a typer which slings its D key; but the repair shop has a loaner and you only lose a day or so of typing. Or running out of ink for mimeoing, but finding out you have to make up lost time on manuscript work anyway -- so you might as well wait till the weekend to get more ink and finish the mimeoing. Or getting the loaner typewriter on your desk and typing four characters and having it jam on you and figuring you've destroyed that machine too...but having your bitter half discover the problem and re-align it and put you back in business.

Does a set of near-omens (like near misses) mean we're going to get a little bit of good news, a small set of writing contracts, or a few small checks? We'll take it, we'll take it.

Hoping you're inclined to do the same -- and get the chance -- until whenever next time is....

JWC



This is my first time of writing this coulmn away from home, so if I make references to things that I've already told you, it's because I don't have a copy of the last Yandro with me, and have forgotten what I said before

MidAmeriCon came off rather well, considering all the dire predictions that were made beforehand about it. Though a wide variety of grumblings have been heard by those working backstage on the con, if you were just going to it and not working, it wasn't bad at all.

The only part that was hopelessly inadequate was MaC's "Find the Pros" party,

held on a very dimly lighted patio, with little way of telling who was who. The lights that were any good were concentrated all in one area, with crowds of people around them so that not much light escaped. I knew most of the people I wanted to get together with; but it must have been harsh on people who didn't have the vaguest idea what the pros looked like or where to look for them. (Couldn't even locate them by the way they walk...)

Simultaneous programming, though serving the purpose of keeping people scattered throughout the area, did mean you had to miss several things you would have liked to have seen. Two events which I did not see, but heard various tales about, were the SF theatre play and Heinlein's speech. Apparently, there were two views about those items: either people loved them or hated them. There was no discernible middle ground among the people I talked with.

Columbus has, I am convinced, the weirdest arrangement of streets of any major city in the U.S. This is the only place where I have found one-way streets running in both directions on the same street. It also holds the record for meandering streets, and for streets that stop dead only to be continued later on.

OIT (Ohio Institute of Technology) turns out to be very little like any of the colleges described to me by relatives and friends. It's more like an inflated high school than anything else. I was rather indifferent to being in high school and the same is true here. I get along with the instructors and try to ignore my fellow students.

Currently I am working part-time for a discount bookstore, The Village Bookshop, Though the temptation to spend all of my salary on the books is great (especially since I get an additional discount for being an employee), I haven't bought too much there; so far.

So far, the only major advantage I have found to living in a big city is the fact that there are all sorts of places selling things which aren't available out in the country. Everything else I could just as well do without.



This may be the final YANDRO of the year; Juanita does more of the work on it than I do, and Juanita is busy with professional writing. Her book contracts seem to come in pairs. But we may try to get a small issue out in December. DEVLINS REVIEW is still being worked on, and that's strictly my fault. I haven't been entirely idle; Charles Fort Never Mentioned Wombats (Sharon Jarvis's title) is tentatively scheduled to appear from Doubleday in June 1977. Gene did more of the work on it than I did, tho not as much more as he did on NYSHIP. And I've been working on a couple of

other books, or outlines of same. I did get a bunch of fanzines reviewed for DEVLINS before being sidetracked on pro writing, and I should get back to it, possibly this weekend.

In our last thrilling installment, the Coulsons and Kay Anderson were preparing to journey to exotic Kansas City, home of stockyards and MidAmeriCon. We made it and a good time was had by all. KC is about 600 miles from here, so we took it in two steps. The first day we drove only as far as the Couch residence south of St. Louis, stopping along the way to see Cahokia Mounds. It's an interesting place. The largest pile of dirt, Monk's Mound, is advertised as the largest prehistoric earthen structure in the world, and the largest Indian artifact north of Mexico. I can believe it. Cahokia is also the location of "Woodhenge"; archaeologists discovered the remains of a circular pattern of wooden posts, "probably used to predict the changing seasons and to determine certain ceremonial periods". (There isn't much to actually see, since the posts eventually rotted and they haven't been reconstructed. But the idea is fascinating.) At the Couches, the convention started a day early; other guests included the Luttrells, Ted White and Dan Saeffan (who left early to make room for the others), Wally & Jackie Franke, Dave Rowe, Mike Harper, Eric Lindsay (who I didn't recognize at first; who expects a crazy Australian to go from the west coast to KC by way of St. Louis?) and others who I've forgotten or was never introduced to.

The convention was also good fun. I saw very little of the formal program, since I was busy huckstering. We saw the masquerade via closed-circuit tv. Our own room tv was no better than what seems to have been the hotel average, but the DeWeeses had a good set and we probably got a better view than most of the fans who attended in person. Only drawback was the fact that we couldn't take pictures. (But then, one of the items I'd have wanted to photograph was Patia's striptease during the intermission, and photographers were requested to not take pictures then.) I particularly wanted to see "The Legend of Hillbilly John", so I found out when it was going to be presented, got there early, and sat through most of a particularly revolting chapter of a Flash Gordon serial while I was waiting. And then, when it came on, I could only understand about one word in four of the dialog. (Other movie fans informed me later that I was sitting in the wrong place; that one had to sit in exactly the right place in order to hear the dialog of any of the movies, due to some flaw in the projector or in the room accoustics.) So I gave up on movie-watching.

I did, however, attend the "Meet The Authors If You Can Find Any" party, mostly because it was held just a few doors down from our room. For some strange reason, it was held outdoors, in the pool area. After dark. With no lights to mention. Several people suggested that instead of the dumb little ribbons which were handed out to identify authors, they should have been issued miner's caps, with lights attached. There were lights at one spot, where I guess authors were supposed to parade across and be recognized, but I wandered by it a couple of times and absolutely nothing was going on. Except maybe a little confusion. With your little author's ribbon, you were given coupons for two free drinks, so I signed up. Mostly, people who wanted

autographs were wandering around peering at nametags (there was enough light so you could see a nametag if you got within six inches of it - and it was possible to autograph a program book without writing over someone else's autograph if everyone else had written heavily). My usual encounter was with some stranger peering at my nametag.

"Nobody you ever heard of," I would say.

"You're right, but would you autograph this anyway?"

And I would, and they would go away, presumably hoping to find out who I was, eventually. About the only real benefit I got out of the affair was a long talk with Mike Harper.

The parties were something else again. I stayed at the Muleback, since there were plenty of parties there to go around. (And as I mentioned to Bob Vardeman, everyone who was anyone was staying there. He looked pained and said he was at the Phillips.) There was a big bash one night in honor of the Freases. It was supposed to be by invitation only, but since the invitations seemed to include everyone attending the con, it got a bit crowded for awhile. Like for the whole event. You had to go out in the hall now and then to breathe. Mr. and Mrs. Heinlein showed up and were promptly engulfed in bodies. I considered going over and mentioning that reading a Heinlein ~~story~~ in the POST is what got me interested in science fiction in the first place, but I would have had to trample a dozen or so people to reach him, and by that time I wasn't up to it. I did get to say hello to Sprague de Camp, and to congratulate the Freases. A good share of the time I was talking to somebody named Cynthia Bunn, who seems to be a new SFWA member, or to Morris Dollens, or to Lesley Towers, an exceedingly charming editor for Harlequin/Laser, or to Kathy Bushman. At one point, Sandra Miesel came charging over, dragged me off a couch where I'd been talking to Dollens, and into the hall. (Getting a few stares in the process; even for the convention it was a rather blatant approach....rather disappointingly, she only wanted to talk about the novel we're jointly working on.)

I had my maiden (if you'll pardon the expression) experience of being taken to dinner by an editor at this con, too. Sharon Jarvis, obviously hoping to get the worst over with in one fell swoop, hosted DeWeese, Bob Tucker, a new author named John Roberts, and myself one evening. (She survived, too; editors are tough.)

My biggest jolt of the convention, though, came on Saturday (I think; it startled me enough so that I'm not sure.) Those of you who have copies of To Renew The Ages will note that it is dedicated to 9 fannes. (Those of you who don't have copies should be ~~ashamed~~ of yourselves.) Leigh Couch had 9 t-shirts made up with the slogan "Official Buck Coulson Groupie" and distributed them at the con; all 9 of the dedicatees were present. And they all wore them that day. (Confused the hell out of most of the con members, I suspect - at least, it made an Albuquerque newspaper as an example of an "incomprehensible slogan" at the con.) In fact, it confused me, at first. I think Bjo Trimble first suggested a groupie photo, but we could never get everyone together at one time (and when we did get me together with 5 of the fannes, Bjo was busy running the art auction, unfortunately.) The photography confused a few more people, since we did it in the hallway leading to the huckster room. On the whole, it's one of the nicest things that ever happened to me in fandom. Something like that means a lot more to me than any sort of award. (Getting the Hugo for YANDRO back in 1965 was nice, but I'll cherish this a lot more.) As I said, I thought each of them deserved an individual dedication, but I'm not sure I can write that many books. There are a lot of nice people in fandom, and Leigh is up near the top.

On the way back, we imposed on the Couches for another overnight stay, and Kay stayed with us for almost another week after the con, allowing us to taper off our fannishness instead of going cold turkey from the time we left the hotel. (We also ran into the Tegens at a restaurant on the return trip, and a fan couple from Virginia at a rest park in Indiana.)

Conventions. I'm typing this on the weekend before Chambanacon. We've already had a disappointment there; Gary Anderson called to say he'd been unable to convince the government that he was urgently needed in the midwest at this particular time, so he won't be going with us. We're expecting one of the better conventions of the year, though; it's always been that, so far.

The art show at the Worldcon was remarkably good - and expensive. (I used to refer to it as the Fan Art Show, the original name, but with \$1400 sculptures displayed, the title with its aura of the amateur is hardly accurate.) I particularly wanted one of the sculptures - a \$650 one - but didn't have the money. (I asked Lesley Tower for an advance on a Laser book that I would write RealSoonNow, but she wouldn't give me one. Editors are a hard-hearted lot.)

Though I might mention that the Laser group - Tower, O'Keefe, and an ad man whose name I don't recall now - made a very favorable impression.

These past two weeks we have been going to various local shows. A gun show at Marion, a rock and mineral show at Marion, a gun show at Hartford City, an arts and crafts show at Marion, and a flea market at Hartford City. The latter, rather surprisingly, was the most productive; I picked up a stack of ANALOGs and another stack of sf paperbacks, many of which will show up with me at Chambanacon. Though I almost bought one of the "crafts" at Marion. It was an ordinary mousetrap, covered with plastic flowers and ribbons. The woman had about a dozen of them at a dollar each, and the sheer idiocy of the thing was almost enough to sucker me into getting one. But sanity prevailed. Juanita picked up some jewelry here and there. (Gun shows in this area are attracting more and more dealers in silver-and-turquoise jewelry. Also coin dealers - are you listening, Joe?) I haven't bought any more lethal iron-mongery lately; too many other uses for my money.

I asked Bruce to get in his Columnn, but so far no response. In case he doesn't, he's now attending Ohio Institute of Technology. Address is 408 E. 13th. Ave., Apt. B, Columbus, OH 43201. Mail sent to him here will reach him - eventually. He's acquired a part-time job in a bookstore, and I only hope he manages to get a fair share of his wages past the door of the place.

We had a small tragedy here a couple of weeks ago. Bat-Ears was chasing the landlord's German Shepherd out of our yard and didn't notice that she was chasing him in front of a moving tractor. The shepherd got out of it with a gashed leg, but Bat was run over and killed. We're not sure how old she was; at least 14 years. Maybe 15. She'd survived 4 other dogs that we had for varying times, and innumerable cats, and it's quite like losing a member of the family.

The endless squabble over fan awards goes on. John Miesel introduced a resolution to drop the fanzine, fan writer and fan artist awards from the Hugo ballot on the grounds that they've become meaningless. I note the idea is being supported by some members of the Fan Awards Committee who seem unaware that their little dinguses have been meaningless from the beginning. All fandom is likely to be plunged into war over a couple of hills that no self-respecting mole would claim. (John is, of course, right, but I'm not going to get worked up about it. Neither set of awards is going to be abolished. Fans like to think they're important, and one way to appear important is to give an award to somebody else. Or to yourself, in the case of the Fan Awards. They're a Symbol of Success; a tangible bit of proof that you have become a big frog in a minuscule puddle. Fans crave them - mostly the fans who don't figure they're going to achieve anything noteworthy anywhere else.)

I don't expect to achieve anything noteworthy anywhere else, either, but I don't care. Fandom is for fun, and I enjoy it. (Groupies are much superior to awards. You can't have fun with an award - unless you're built rather oddly...)

The medical profession is starting to have it in for me. I inquired of my physician, via note, whether or not to have a swine flu shot, and he sent back a little note saying all pigs should be shot. Which wasn't so bad. But then to add injury to insult, I went in later for a shot for my asthma. His regular nurse always gives it to me in the rear, but this time he had a new nurse, so I hopefully inquired if she wanted arm or rear.

She said, "Rear."

I said something to the effect that nurses seemed to have this fascination for my hindquarters.

She said, "Well, I'm not too good at this yet, and it's a bigger target."

I know when I'm licked; she didn't have to follow it up by putting the needle halfway through me...

And I hope you're feeling the same. All of you. We'll be back; maybe next month and maybe next year, but back. We have all this mimeo paper taking up room.... RSC

AND THAT'S TRUE TOO

COLUMN BY

Denny Lien

This column missed the last issue of Yandro. It will concentrate on improving its aim in the future (it's easier than concentrating on improving its quality).

I wouldn't have missed if the Coulsons hadn't been ambitious enough to put out two issues in a (short) row -- obviously they'd received a bargain on a lot of very loo-o-ong staples. Since I have difficulty putting out one installment of this column in a row, I was caught by the short margins. What can I say; I overslept?

Anyway, you've all had an extended chance to study extra hard for the discussion topic of the moment, and I consequently expect a spirited class discussion (though I'll settle for a mimeoed one).

The topic under discussion for the moment (these things have a tendency to change) is Science Fiction in Everyday Life.

We turn first to -- hmm. Excuse me. I have here a note from the mother of -- well, you know who you are -- asking that you be excused on the basis that you have never been exposed to everyday life; only fandom. This strikes me as a eminently reasonable request, and on first thought, I am inclined to grant it. On second thought, I am prone to argue.

As soon as I straighten up again, we can continue to begin. SMOF if you got 'em.

We turn first to second-hand book stores.

Science fiction in second-hand book stores. (No, I know there isn't any of it there most of the time, except for copies of FANTASTIC VOYAGE. That isn't what I meant; not science fiction books in second-hand book stores; genuine science fiction situations. (Situation wanted: science-fictional preferred. Willing to relocate, regenerate, and/or mutate.) I'll get around to explaining what I mean as soon as I close that first set of parentheses; thus:).

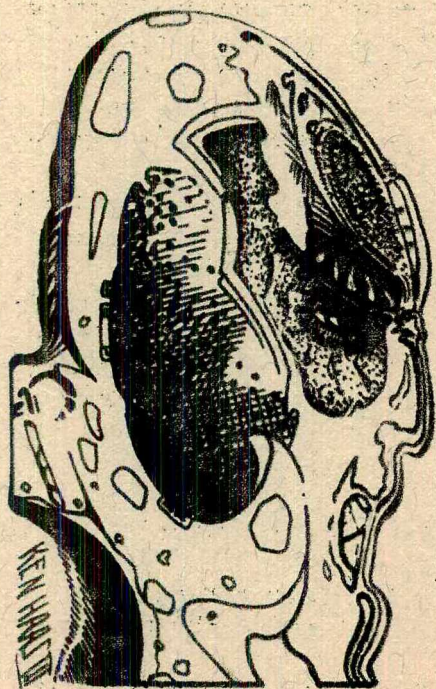
Consider you enter any given second-hand book store and see what on the shelves? (Other than dust and the odd mouse.) Best-sellers. Copies of NONE DARE CALL IT TREASON. Porn. Copies of FANTASTIC VOYAGE. Freebies from L. Ron Hubbard or Hari Krishna. Louis L'Amour. Crossword puzzle books. More best-sellers. More porn. More...

Wait a moment. (And another one; I'm not all that fast a typist.) Crossword puzzle books. Second-hand crossword puzzle books. Consider the implications:

Such books come, as do the individual puzzles therein, in two categories: already worked and not already worked.

If they are already worked, why did the owner of the book store accept them? Who -- or What -- does he/she expect will buy them?

If they are not already worked, why did their original owner buy them in the first place? Why pay .95 for a book only to pass it on, unopened, for .10 or so to a second-hand dealer?



It occurs to me that I don't know if the books I keep seeing in such stores are or are not worked -- I've never opened one to find out. But someone must sometime. I've never seen anyone do so, though...

Mundane explanation: they are already worked; the solutions contain clues to atom bomb secrets; the store is a front; its customers are all international spies. (Er -- quasi-mundane explanation?)

Slightly less mundane explanation: the original owner worked all of the puzzles in his/her/its head(s) before turning the book in. But such an owner, unless there was something to hide, would presumably be working for the Pentagon, or possible Ringling Brothers, and drawing a salary big enough to make the .10 not worth the effort. (The something to hide might include the number of heads or the shape thereof.)

Still less mundane explanation: the puzzles are a trap. The store is a front and the storekeeper is a ringer; the whole set-up is directed toward causing innocent bystanders to open such books and stare at the patterns therein. Black squares; white squares; interlocking sequences...it's all sounding a bit like mystic Yellow Signs, or the symbolic logic that sent Harold Shea adventuring through alternate dimensions.

As I said, I've never opened one of the books in such a store to see what it's doing there. I've never seen anyone else do so either. And the books stay on the shelves; no one ever seems to buy one...

I wonder if anyone has ever tried comparing an aerial photograph of the Bermuda Triangle to a crossword puzzle? Perfectly innocent until you try to fill in 13-Down without putting in 17-Across first; then your eye finds itself locked into the pattern, and you suddenly perceive the existence of 15-Diagonal; 23-Sideways; and 19-Moebius...

On the other hand, don't worry about it. I've never seen anyone buy (or open) a copy of NONE DARE CALL IT TREASON either.

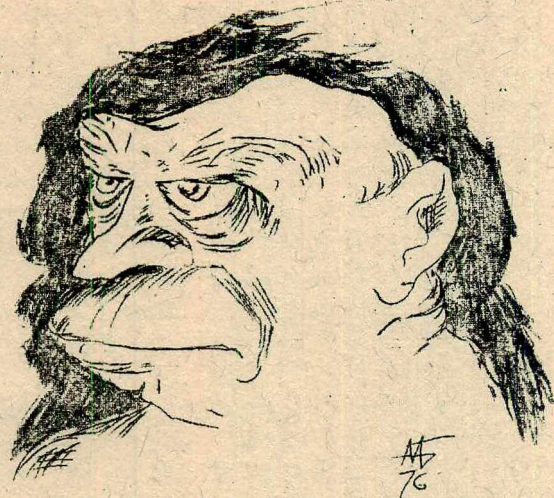
The second Science Fiction in Everyday Life test case for today is an old standard: disappearing socks from closely-watched laundry washing machines.

Let's review the evidence from previous cases: (1) the mysterious disappearances never involve more than one sock per pair. (Two per pair is unheard of, while three is right out.) (2) Said disappearances average at least one per laundry/week. (3) No correlation can be established on basis of size, color, expense, or material. (4) On rare occasions, a vanished sock will reappear weeks later, as mysteriously as it went. Such returns will generally be coupled with the disappearance of a totally different sock. (5) Such disappearances are confined to socks. No cases of the transmogrification of a pair of thermal underwear can be found in the copious literature on the subject. Turtlenecks are safe. Bib overalls can breathe easily. (Metaphorically speaking.)

-- I need hardly point out how sinister this all is.

(Oh -- I do need do so? Sigh; so much for shorthand. What ever happened to sf readers' Sense of ~~Wonder?~~ Wonder?,

Well -- cherchez l'alien. Socks are not (so far as we know) sentient; if they're disappearing, someone/thing is presumably causing them to do so. Since they disappear from inside enclosed washing machines, the trick is beyond known earthling capability. Occam's Razor requires aliens. As for motive:



The least frightening hypothesis is simply that the alien requires socks for its feet, or possibly tentacles, and finds this the simplest way to acquire same, wrongly believing we will never suspect. Circumstances suggest that either (a) said alien has only one foot; or (b) a multi-appendaged alien has religious and/or aesthetic reasons for preferring no two colors, sizes, or styles of covering to be alike.

The fact that only socks vanish suggest that the alien consists of virtually nothing but feet (or tentacles): I visualize octopods, alla Wells' Martians, which would look silly in (say) turtlenecks.

A somewhat more frightening hypothesis is that the alien is not using the socks as socks, but as fetish objects. I don't recall ever reading an sf story about sexually kinky aliens using the earth and its inhabitants simply as a means of getting their krkzoch'lwrtks off, but I'd rather read about it than live through it. Extra-dimensional Dirty Old Things: Flashers From Out There: "Earthlings; I must submit to your Sox Appeal..." Ugh.

An even more frightening theory has to do with the socks that return: can we be sure they are the same? Have they been changed by their sojourn -- outside? Might they be clever plastic duplicates, transmitting at all times to listeners beyond this world data which will be useful when they decide it is time to invade? Think about it the next time your left ankle displays a strange urge to walk around a defense plant...

And near the top of the frightening chart, consider any of the following: (a) socks are sentient and are just practising; (b) the swirls inside the washing machines are also congruent to waves within the Bermuda Triangle and/or patterns in the un-earthly crossword puzzles; (c) there is no explanation and need be none because the universe does not make sense and events truly are random -- which is to say that we're living inside a giant J.G. Ballard novel.

I think I'll take alien fetish freaks anyway.

Why hasn't Hans Holzer looked into this yet? Who is covering up?

(So much for Everyday Life --- next time, back to normal.)

THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE MAILBOX, Section I

ALICE HOPF sends a clipping, dateline Chicago. A young woman fired at a man as he fled from her apartment after raping, and throwing from a 15th. floor window, one of her friends. She was promptly arrested and charged with firing a gun inside city limits; the Chicago police are ever-alert to halt crime.//The Fort Wayne paper had a short article on the man who hired a city policeman (in Pensacola) to kill his ex-wife. (Well, we all know about moonlighting cops.) The killing failed; the cop told his superiors. Now the would-be murderer and his wife have joined in a suit to get his payment back from the city. (His wife wants the money because he's behind in alimony payments. Ex-wife, not wife.) // Chris Walker sends one on Bicentennial promotions, and the "Bicentennial Bad Taste Award" inaugurated by a disgruntled Texan. The awards went to people selling red-white-and-blue caskets, liberty-bell-shaped whisky bottles, and a "Spirit of 76" sale of bull semen. (They had the right animal, anyway.) ALAN LANKIN sends a clipping about a headless ghost which has shut down an electrical equipment factory in Kuala Lumpur; the workers refused to return to work until the ghost had been exorcized by a local witch doctor. The factory produced semiconductors for the electronics industry.//I have a London dateline clipping about a berserk rabbit which attacked the driver of a subway train and temporarily halted service.// IRV JACOBS sends a notice from U. of California, San Diego, offering more science-fictional courses; this time on space propulsion. (One course, not "courses".) Covers "Blasters, ray guns, disintegrators and laser power stations", "Atomic powered spaceships and interstellar ramjets", "The colonization of space", "Speculative space drives", and others.//Mary Schaub sends a capsule history of the "Veterans of Future Wars" which sprang up on college campuses in the late 1930s after Congress agreed to pay the WW I veterans' bonus ahead of schedule. At its height, it included 50,000 students, which is pretty good for a mild joke. And I liked one of the slogans; "We will make the world safe for hypocrisy". I think our political leaders have been taking that one seriously.//The overflow items, including about a pageful from Lester Boutillier, will be around next issue; this time we have only another $\frac{1}{2}$ page at back.

TOM SWIFT GROANS AGAIN

OR: "NITROUS OXIDE!" FUMED TOM.

by _____ GENE DEWEESE

There are times when I wonder about myself, there really are. One such time was a few months ago, when I found a tiny notebook tucked away in the corner of a desk drawer I was cleaning out. It was full of Tom Swifties, nearly fifty of them. All in my own handwriting. What got to me, though, was not the fact that I had squirreled away a half hundred of the worst puns I'd ever perpetrated. After all, I'm a packrat by nature, both mentally and physically, so, while I may lose or forget a lot of things, I deliberately discard something only at the point of an ultimatum or a gun. No, what disturbed me was that some of those atrocities still struck me as being -- well, "funny" certainly isn't the right word. Groanworthy is more like it, I suppose. But what's worse, I promptly started making up more of the damned things!

Then, in one of my more lucid moments, it occurred to me that there are certainly a lot of similarly afflicted people out there in the world, particularly amongst the readers of Yandro. In fact, if memory serves, one such unfortunate may have had a hand in generating some of these a number of years ago, back in his Fond du Lac furnace days. Such people should, of course, be exposed, and I have designed a test by which they can be detected. (What you do with them after you've detected them is your problem, not mine. And if the mention of the word "test" inspired you to comment, "'I hate it when the end of the semester comes around,' said Tom, testily," you need go no further. You are one of the unfortunates we're after.)

Before we get to the test, though, I had better explain the levels. Yes, I said levels. There are at least four levels of Swifties. The first, and least challenging, consists of such simple minded things as: "I've always liked marshmallows," said Tom softly. "Softly" refers back to "marshmallows," and that's all there is to it. Very pedestrian.

A second level Swiftie is one in which, as in level one, the modifier refers only to something in Tom's statement, but contains two puns rather than just one. For example: "I lost my watch in that tomb back there," said Tom, cryptically. Or, if you don't like for a watch to "tic," you could make it: "That tomb scared me so much, I think I've developed a twitch in my eye," said Tom, cryptically.

In third level Swifties, there is only one pun, but the modifier describes the way Tom might actually speak the line. For example: "You mean I have to cut down this whole yard full of weeds without even a lawn mower?" asked Tom, sickly. It is only reasonable that, faced with a long day at work with only a sickle, Tom would sound sick when he made the comment.

The fourth level combines the second and third levels: These are rather rare, and I could only find a couple in the entire notebook: "Aren't you people ever going to get around to returning my tv-stereo set?" asked Tom, disconsolately.

Finally, there are the free form Swifties. I didn't realize this kind existed until I started searching for a suitably disgusting title for this article. I didn't find one, but I did discover a free form Swiftie. Since I just made up this form, I can't define it very well, except to say that it's anything that is more complicated than fourth level, such as the following, which has, at last count, at least five

shoddy interrelationships in it:

"I hope you like my article on those lost U-Boats," wrote Tom, submissively.
And here's the test.

PART I. (Fill in the blanks)

1. "Think nothing of it; I like to unclog drains this way," said Tom _____.
(Second level, and, frankly, just a bit disgusting.)
2. "I just love your new furniture!" said Tom, _____.
(Third level, sort of.)
3. "Even though you're much too small to play a regular position on our hockey team, there is something we could use you for," said Tom, _____.
(Third level, assuming Tom has a sense of humor.)
4. "I've just arrived on Jupiter," said Tom, _____. "But I've really been enjoying it," he added, _____. (One first and one third.)
5. "They saw through my disguise as an Arab ruler, and I barely escaped with my life," said Tom _____. (Third level)
6. "That villain has hypnotized my mom and dad!" said Tom, _____.
(Second level)
7. "My god! The moon is already full again!" said Larry Talbot, _____.
(Not quite a pure Swifty, but, then, who said they all had to be about Tom Swift. For this one, there are at least two separate, third level answers.)

PART II. (Just the opposite of Part I. Make up a statement or question to go with each of the following modifiers.)

1. Seductively (at least second level)
2. Excitedly (third level, and a little sick)
3. Consolingly (that other fourth level one I mentioned)
4. Galvanically (second level)
5. Disgustedly (I'm not sure what this one is, but I think I may have cheated a little. Maybe you can do better.)
6. Humbly (third level)
7. Remorselessly (almost second level)

ANSWERS: part PART I

1. succinctly (I told you it was disgusting)
2. suitely
3. puckishly
4. heavily; jovially
5. shakily
6. transparently
7. harriedly or furiously

PART II:

1. "What are those silly looking birds over there, the ones going 'quack'?"
2. "My god! I think I've gone blind!"
3. "I'm sure you'll have another chance in your next life to do better."
(Tom said to the death row inmate)
4. "I just drove a busload of women across town."
5. "Until I legally changed my name, it was Gustav Theodore."
6. "I know the tune, but not the words."
7. "I'm afraid I still haven't learned the code."

THE END (said Tom, finally.)

PHONE FANDOM } BY BRUCE COULSON

Phone fandom can be described as the communication of fans over the telephone over a long period of time. The time element is important. One phone call does not an addict make. One must call up fans for a long period of time, and also talk to them for long periods of time. Then, and only then, you might be considered a phone fan.

Phone fandom is the least exclusive of the sub-groups. Nowadays, when fandom is on the verge of splitting up into various sub-groups, it's nice to find something where all fans can join in. SCA, con fans, fanzine fans - all can be phone fans as well. In many cases this is the only item they have in common. Still, it's a start toward bridging the gap.

I cannot, as yet, say why phone fandom sprang up like some noxious weed. Availability couldn't be the answer; the phone has been available throughout the existence of fandom as we know it. Though much cheaper now than then, it is still more expensive to call for three minutes than it is to write, unless it's a local call. I think the basic cause is a combination of growing disgust with the post office, together with impatience in the younger fan. Not willing to wait the few days for a reply to their inquiries, they have decided the shortcut offered by the phone is worth the additional cost.

Phone fandom is also addictive, a fact that I found out with a feeling akin to horror. Normally I rarely use the phone. Six times in a year has been a good average. But now, living with a registered member of phone fandom, I find that the number of calls I've been making have increased radically. If this trend isn't checked, I might find myself categorized with these same people.

Phone fandeers tend to run up enormous bills, due to the fact that the bulk of the membership is composed of impoverished college students. Usually they are honest enough to pay up eventually; however, members of phone fandom are in ill-favor with the minions of Ma Bell.

They also tend to be rather casual in whom they call. A certain well-known mid-western member of the group once called our house and immediately inquired "Joe?" under the impression that he had reached the Hensley residence. Only mildly non-plussed at missing his mark by 200 miles, he spent some time talking with us anyway.

Some stf fans have taken a mild view of this insidious crew, saying that many of them are good stf fans in most other respects, and that we should be understanding about these minor quirks. But this is part of their plot against fandom; to appear as harmless eccentrics. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Under this guise, these fiends intend nothing less than the destruction of all fandom as we know it!

Their plot is simple, once you have penetrated their disguise. They intend to subvert all of the new fans, the young blood that fandom needs, to this foul cult. Gradually, as these new ones become wealthy enough to support their habit, it will become the sole method of communication between fans. Fanzines will become phonezines, with entire clubs banding together to pay for the staggering bills incurred. Meanwhile, the elite few of this group that knew the secret will preserve the art of producing fanzines, writing coherent articles, and even reviews. Then, at the proper time, they will start a secret society, held together by what then will be these all but forgotten arts. This society will rule all of fandom!

And so I say unto you, fight these monsters! Refuse their phone calls! Keep the sacred art of publishing fanzines alive, no matter what the cost in frazzled nerves and arguments with bureaucracy. Resist the temptation to expedite matters by using that instrument of Satan, the telephone. Remember, only you can prevent phone fandom!

[Ed. note: Bruce may have had something to add to this article, but if so, it will never be known. I refused his call. RSC]

GOLDEN MINUTES

UPON THE WINDS OF YESTERDAY, by George Barr [Donald M. Grant, Publisher, West Kingston RI -- \$25]. And worth every penny. Contains, by my count, 53 color works and 9 black-and-white illustrations by Barr, plus short articles about Barr by Tim Kirk, Stuart Schiff, and George Barr. Fairly large-sized: 8 1/2 x 11. Of course, in an art book it's not so much the quantity as the quality; no point in getting a lot of illustrations if the reproduction is no good. From the few originals of this lot that I've seen, I'd say the reproduction here is excellent. There is a good variety; while most of his professional book and magazine covers are included, a lot of the work was done for private collectors and has not been seen by fandom in general. (One of these days when I have some spare cash, I'm going to commission a Barr work myself. I have just the scene in mind...no, George, not the pornographic one we kidded about years ago.) And, of course, one must admire the artist before laying out money for an art book. I've been admiring Barr's art since 1959, at least. (And if you have any taste you'll admire it, too. Go buy the book. It's probably the best stf book of the year.)

THE DYING EARTH, by Jack Vance [Underwood/Miller -- \$15]. Speaking of Barr, he does the dust jacket, 20 interior black-and-whites, and a map for this limited edition hardcover of the Vance classic. It's possibly Vance's best work; his facility for exotic creatures and backgrounds was at its peak here. The stories themselves are fairly simple; you read it for the magic alien mood that he evokes. Of course, you can read the fiction in the various pb editions (though the original one is now commanding nearly this hardcover price from collectors). You get the hardcover for permanence (which the stories deserve) and for the artwork. Jacket and most of the interiors here are very good, though I admit to feeling that a couple were a trifle crude. In general, though, it's well worth the money.

ROGUES IN THE HOUSE, by Robert E. Howard [Don Grant -- \$15]. Fifth in the matched set of Conan hardcovers. Title story and "The Frost-Giant's Daughter". Very nice artwork by Marcus Boas, who seems to be inspired by Frazetta in some of his paintings, and strictly original in others. Eleven colorplates, which is a lot; more than usual in the series. The title story is one of Howard's better ones except for the Superman touch at the climax; "Daughter" is more of an event than a story, and is perfectly predictable. (But it's a favorite for illustrators.) Recommended mostly if you like wellmade books, because this is one of the best.

OTHER PLACES, OTHER TIMES, by Randy Bathurst [Outworlds Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 96147, Cleveland OH 44101 -- \$2.75]. Subtitled "a slightly odd coloring book". You get 24 Bathurst cartoons on nice heavy 8 1/2 x 11 paper. Worth the price? That depends. It seems a bit high, but Bathurst's critters are intriguing. (Like all art books, it depends on how well you like the artist, and there are a lot of Bathurst fans around.)

WHO WAS THAT MONOLITH I SAW YOU WITH?, by Michael Goodwin [Heritage, P.O. Box 721, Forest Park GA 30050 -- \$3.00]. More cartoons. 112 pages; digest sized. These are cartoons in the original sense; the humor is not in the drawing but in the tag lines and the juxtaposition of mutually contradictory ideas. Most of these are "Star Trek" cartoons (meaning it loses most Yandro readers right there). Humor in most of them is about fanzine standard; somewhat mediocre. A few of them struck me as hilariously funny. Hesitantly recommended.

THE LAST CELT, by Glenn Lord [Don Grant -- \$20.00] A big one for your money; 7 x 10 and over 400 pages. 248 pages of this consists of bibliography. If it doesn't contain mention of every published scrap of Howard material, it must come close. The first hundred pages are a sort of biography of Robert E. Howard. This is more of a collecting and editing job than it is a writing one. Various Howard autobiographical articles are included, and there are articles about Howard by Lord, H.P. Lovecraft, Alvin Perry, E. Hoffman Price, and Harold Preece. They combine to give a general "feel" of Howard's personality, but actual biographical facts are a bit skimpy; Lord covers the available facts in 10 pages. The last 72 pages are in a section titled "Miscellanea" and include photo-reproductions of magazine covers featuring Howard stories, some scraps of unfinished fiction, a facsimile of a story handwritten for a high school English class, letters, cartoons, family photos, and a funeral notice. For the fanatic, this compendium should serve as a giant Howard encyclopedia; for the average science fiction fan, the appeal is extremely limited. As usual with Grant books, it's wellmade and if you buy it you can will it to your grandchildren. But if you're looking for enjoyable reading, save your money. This is informative, not entertaining.

THE MAKING OF KING KONG, by Orville Goldner and George Turner [Ballantine, \$3.95] The hardcover came out last year, and at least a few dozen fans bought it; the paperback should be a must for anyone with the slightest interest in fantasy films. This bears down heavily on the photographic and model-making techniques used in the film; Goldner was one of the technicians. But it also covers all sorts of byways, including the backgrounds of the producers. (I discovered that, as I had suspected, the Merian Cooper who produced "Kong" is the Merian Cooper who was briefly the leader of the Kosciusko Squadron in the Russo-Polish War of 1919, as mentioned in FLIGHT OF EAGLES.) In fact, a biography of Cooper and/or Schoedsack should prove fascinating, all by itself. Except for the monsters, they seemed to get into the sort of adventures they depicted on film. We're on page 77 before we even get to "Kong", and it's all fascinating. Even after that, there are odd bits of interesting information -- such as that the great wall around the village was originated for the DeMille "King of Kings" and eventually, after time and years had made it a bit rickety, went out in a blaze of glory as a large part of Atlanta in GONE WITH THE WIND. The book is, of course, heavily illustrated, with stills from the movie, advertising, a few scenes that ended on the cutting-room floor, and shots showing how the trick photography was done. An excellent production.

PATTERNMASTER, by Octavia Butler [Doubleday -- \$5.95] A psi-powered feudalism. The hero is an heir to the throne, but he must develop his powers to meet the mental attacks of his older and more experienced rivals. A totally unoriginal plot, but well enough handled. Recommended as an adventure story.

THE GARMENTS OF CAEAN, by Barrington J. Bayley [Doubleday, \$5.95] An original idea; an extrapolation of the cliché that "clothes make the man". It's not, of course, enough for a novel, so there are intergalactic plots and counterplots. Technically, it's much better than the Butler book, but I didn't enjoy it as much,

DEATH ORCHIDS AND OTHER BIZARRE TALES, [Robert Weinberg, 10606 S. Central Park, Chicago IL 60655 -- \$5.00] #13 in Weinberg's "Pulp Classics" series, this contains 7 stories reprinted from Spicy Mystery, Ace Mystery, and Mystery Tales. These are the "weird mystery" type, in which a fantasy element is present but generally dispelled at the end and a more or less logical explanation offered. They also generally feature a scantily-clad heroine threatened by a fate worse than death -- people still believed in that in the 1930s. (Sex is hinted at in the illustrations, but in the stories themselves, sadism is substituted.) The original illustrations are included. Plotting and characterization is mediocre, making these well above average of their type. Interesting, if somewhat sick.

HEALER, by F. Paul Wilson [Doubleday -- \$5.95] The problems of an immortal among a universe of mortals. A fair amount of action, but the idea has been done before, and

while there is a lot of mental agonizing over our hero's social problems, it doesn't stir up much empathy with the reader, and he never really comes to grips with them. Not recommended.

SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY PSEUDONYMS, by Barry McGhan [Howard Devore, 4705 Weddel, Dearborn MI 48125 -- \$1.50] A neat, 70-page listing, indexed by both pseudonyms and real names. So you can, for example, find out that "Walter Drummond" is Bob Silverberg and then check the Silverberg entry to find 23 of Silverberg's other pseudonyms. A list of sources is also keyed to each entry, so you can tell where the information came from, if you feel inclined to argue any point. Printing is a bit faint on some pages of my copy, but it's entirely legible. Recommended to anyone interested in which authors are which.

A HISTORY OF THE HUGO, NEBULA, AND INTERNATIONAL FANTASY AWARDS, by Don Franson and Howard Devore (Howard Devore - \$1.60] The title covers it; nominees, winners, and a short history of each award is included. 1974 is the last year listed. The booklet is updated every two or three years to keep it current. If you get into fandom you'll find that you can keep up to date through fanzines, though a new edition of the book is handy if you want to look up something in a hurry. Most of my own use of this one has been in imparting information to other people; a surprising number seem desperate for the information.

BEASTS, by John Crowley [Doubleday - \$5.95] The science of cell fusion is provided as a shaky basis for a novel where symbols are more important than facts. ("...high-protein wheat, tough as weeds." And as tasteless, Loren added." But weeds aren't tasteless; the taste may not be to one's liking, but there is plenty of flavor there.) Human cells have been fused with those of lions and foxes, creating hybrids, but the characteristics of these hybrids partake of the symbolic attributes of lions and foxes, not the real ones. The theme seems to be the common one in contemporary literature: that emotion is a better guide to action than is logic. (Which is why we have such marvelous human relationships today, no doubt.) A ridiculous book, but I'm sure it will be popular. (And I did read it all the way through, which shows something about Crowley's technical ability as a writer.)

THE GRAYSPACE BEAST, by Gordon Eklund [Doubleday - \$5.95] I don't like Eklund's novels. If you do, this one is available. I won't attempt to review it because that would necessitate reading it.

HOME BREW, by Poul Anderson [Nesfa Press, \$10.00] A limited-edition hardcover, issued to commemorate Paul's appearance as GoH at Boskone. Nesfa has been doing this for 5 years now, and publishing costs have finally jacked the price up to my breaking point, so this is probably the last of the series I'll review. A pb-sized, 75-page book isn't worth the money, though I suppose its comparative rarity will bring the collector's value up in time. Contents are a few short articles, poetry, one sort-of-story, epigrams, and three illustrations by Rick Sternbach which are very pretty but which I would cheerfully dispense with for the sake of a lower price. The contents are interesting enough, though I'd read most of them previously in various fanzines, but they don't justify the price.

TIME OF THE FOURTH HORSEMAN, by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro [Doubleday, \$5.95] A totally non-scientific book about curing overpopulation by encouraging plagues. The sole encouragement consists of rendering some of the vaccine ineffective, and a population which has been so thoroughly vaccinated that the diseases have been totally stamped out -- when they reoccur, they aren't even recognized -- is not going to succumb to plague as soon as the vaccinations are stopped. Yarbro seems to have the idea that disease germs are constantly lurking about us, waiting for a chance to strike, like the medieval concept of devils. The heroine, of course, abhors this culling of the population, though she never does provide an alternative cure for the overpopulation which has been previously shown to be strangling the world. The book contains lots of emotion, but no real confrontation of the issues raised. Not recommended.

A GALAXY OF STRANGERS, by Lloyd Biggle [Doubleday - \$5.95] A collection of short stories, originally published between 1958 and 1974. "And Madly Teach" extrapolates audio-visual education, "The Double-Edged Rope" comments on the ease with which censorship can be used to cover activities inimical to the censors. "Eye For an Eye" is a somewhat overdone story about the evils of unfettered capitalism. "First Love" is an alien visitor who is not quite what she seems. "Who's On First?" is the usual farce about disguised alien ballplayers -- psi-powered, in this case. "Round Trip To Esidarap" is a comedy about an odd form of culture shock. "No Biz Like Show Biz" is a rather odd extrapolation of criminal justice. And "What Hath God Wrought!" concerns the ultimate lottery. The stories are all amusing, some are slightly satirical, and they're all eminently forgettable. Which, I suppose, is why Biggle can produce such entertaining fiction without ever seeming to make much of an impact on the field. These are good stories, but not great stories.

OFFICIAL GUIDE TO THE FANTASTICS, by Michael Resnick [House of Collectibles, \$5.95] A digest-sized price guide to science fiction books, magazines, fanzines, artwork, and miscellanea. Dealers and collectors seem to be regarding this one as a controversial item; they seem to feel it impugns their expertise in one form or another. It is not necessarily a good guide to what you should pay for a specific item; in pulp magazines, condition is at least as important as it is in coin collecting, and no possible guide could cover it properly. It is restricted to U.S. material for reasons of size and price; a complete world index, even of this type, would cost more than you could afford and be bigger than you could comfortably handle. What it does is provide a rough guide for the small-time collector or dealer with only a few items to handle (and for the outsider: those mundane bookdealers "whose expertise does not extend to science fiction" where Resnick says you can get a bargain. Or where you could get a bargain before his book appeared.). And it should be useful to wave at an insurance agent; I haven't tried it yet, but it's the main reason I bought it.

THE SPAGYRIC QUEST OF BERGALDUS COSMOPOLITA, by Arthur Machen [Purple Mouth Press] I'm not sure what I paid for it; \$1, I think. Purple Mouth Press is Ned Brooks, incidentally. Arthur Machen being whimsical isn't exactly my cup of tea; I found it less interesting than the usual Machen story. I'd have probably appreciated it more if I had a good classical education and could understand more of the allusions -- or maybe I wouldn't. It's illustrated by Mae and Danny Strelkov.

WATERSPOUT UP, by Anne Etkin [T-K-Graphics, P.O. Box 1951, Baltimore MD 21203 - \$2.] A 64-page parody of WATERSHIP DOWN. The length works against it; it's hard to sustain a parody at that length, particularly when keeping precisely to the original storyline and chapters. Ms Etkin doesn't quite do it for the full distance, but there is a fair amount of humor in here. It just isn't absolutely hilarious as some shorter parodies manage to be.

THE MAGINATION, by Anne Etkin [T-K Graphics, \$1.50] A parody of the Mabinogen. This is a bit harder, because the original is pretty silly in itself, and the parodist has to reach too hard to top it. A nice try, but not entirely successful. (Though at that, it's a better set of rude folk-tales than Stanislaw Lem managed to produce.)

GOING, by Sumner Locke Elliott [Pocket Books, \$1.75] The cover on this makes it look like a period romance, and basically the book is about growing up, learning about life, romance and disillusionment. But it is told as the recollections of a 65-year old woman on her way to a euthanasia center, and many of the memories concern her son-in-law, who is now the power behind the throne of the American dictatorship. It's an odd book, all in all. Recommended primarily to fem-fans; the climax might prove a shock to some of our males. But definitely recommended; it's quite interesting.

THE LATE GREAT FUTURE, edited by Gregory Fitz Gerald & John Dillon [Fawcett, \$1.75] The Psychological Future might be a more accurate title. "When We Went To See The End of the World," by Bob Silverberg, concerns the middleclass American response to awesome scientific feats. (Or at least, the response of the middle-class American as envisioned by the socially-conscious writer: the academically-approved stereotype.)

"A Thing of Custom," by L. Sprague de Camp, shows one of the little problems of inter-planetary social life and is quietly funny. "The Pedestrian," by Ray Bradbury, is a future horror story -- an improbable one, once you think about it, but very effective. "William and Mary," by Roald Dahl, is another chiller, this one concerning domestic relationships. The gadgetry is new, the theme is old. "Flowers For Algernon," by Daniel Keyes, is one of the sf classics; it's both sentimental and one of the most horrifying ideas sf has ever come up with (at least partially because it has no villain, nothing you can blame for the outcome, not even Nature, or Science). "The Country of the Kind," by Damon Knight, is one psychopath in a totally sane world -- and the reader must have some sympathy for him; totally unbelievable, but a nice exercise in writing. "Come To Venus Melancholy," by Thomas M. Disch, concerns a neurotic house, another unconvincing but interesting bit of literary psychology. "How Beautiful With Banners," by James Blish, with its alien love affair, is moderately amusing but as stilted as most of Silverberg's fiction. "The Totally Rich," by John Brunner, covers another psychosis that I don't really believe in, but it's a nice story. "America the Beautiful," by Fritz Leiber, tries to explore the psychology behind a national predilection to violence, not very successfully, from my point of view. "The Annex," by John D. MacDonald, is not really either science fiction or the future, though it's strange enough. "The Shoddy Lands," by C.S. Lewis, is an odd sort of fantasy, simply a mental journey through what we laughingly call the mundane mind. "Crucifixus Etiam," by Walter M. Miller, offers a reason for living (not mine, but a good one). And "Three Portraits and a Prayer," by Frederik Pohl, concerns human greed and the scientific attitude. Overall: good enough if you haven't already read most of the contents.

BEYOND TIME, by Sandra Ley [Pocket Books, \$1.95] No chance of you having read these stories before. This is an original anthology on the theme of alternate worlds, generally one of my favorite subjects. "The Cliometricon," by George Zebrowski, is a moment in the mind of an alternate-historian. "The Rising of the Sun," by Gordon Eklund, is an event in a totally alien world; well done. "Jupiter Laughs," by Edmund Cooper, is alternate history for readers who don't know any real history. "Worlds Enough," by Don Thompson, is sort of an ingroup joke. (This is the Cleveland Thompson, not the Denver one.) "Assault on Fat Mountain," by R.A. Lafferty, is an allegory and not one of Lafferty's best (all Lafferty's characters come from alternate worlds; deliberately aiming for that puts them one step farther removed from reality). "O Brave New World," by Avram Davidson, is not terribly believable, but it's a nicely funny satire. "Hail To The Chief," by Lucy Cores, is another satire, considerably more obvious and not nearly so funny. "Soy la Libertad," by me, is about divided loyalties in a divided continent (I had more fun working out the background than I did the story). "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sky," by Robert Chilson, is a little obvious, but still a cute vignette. "A Class With Dr. Chang," by Ward Moore, examines student revolt in a properly liberal America (I like the irony). "Unscheduled Flight," by Juanita, is really the opening chapter in what might be a fascinating novel. "Alternate Universe I" (and II and III), by Tom Disch, are three ideas expressed in blank verse; well enough expressed, I guess, but not all that great as ideas. "Polonaise," by Alan Dean Foster, is a good enough story, but anything based on the assumption that the Poles are a gentle people is a world so far alternate from ours that I have severe problems in suspending my disbelief. "U-Genie SX1 -- Human Entrepreneur Naturally Rapacious Yankee," by Dmitri V. Gat, is spoiled by including a version of "our" future which is less real than his alternate one. "Letter From America," by H.R. Percy, concerns terrorism in a modern French-colonial America. "The Napoleonic Wars," by Felix Gotschalk, is about decadence in another French-dominated country. "Checkmate in Six Moves," by Olga Ley, is one of the few non-American alternates: a changed and improved Russia under the Czars. "Many Rubicons," by Michael Orgill, is an American dictatorship by the MacArthurs (I wonder if they cleared that one for libel?). "The Fellini Beggar," by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, covers an alternate musical world; very good. And "All Possible Worlds," by Laurence Janifer, is an interesting idea based on idiotic philosophy. All in all, I've read better anthologies,

but go buy this one anyway; Juanita and I get royalties from it. (And there are some good stories in it.)

THE SPACE BEYOND, by John W. Campbell, Jr. [Pyramid, \$1.75] Three previously unpublished stories; two novelets and a short novel. Previously unpublished for good reason, as a matter of fact (though presumably Campbell would have tightened them up a bit eventually). Rough drafts of possible greatness ("All" eventually became Heinlein's SIXTH COLUMN, a perfectly obvious fact which is mentioned by both Asimov and George Zebrowski, whose comments on the stories are included.) For sf historians.

THE STORM LORD, by Tanith Lee [DAW #193, \$1.75] After getting Tiptree's objections to my review of the last Lee novel, I read this one carefully. Okay; it's highclass swords and sorcery, with some grasp of politics and a vast amount of petty detail included (in fact, it's a good hundred pages longer than it should be, in my opinion.) It's probably too well written for the Gardner Fox (or John Norman) fans. But I still couldn't get all that interested in it. Her characters are all neurotic, haunted, driven, and not very interesting.

MERLIN'S GODSON, by H. Warner Munn [Ballantine, \$1.95] A combination of KING OF THE WORLD'S EDGE, which I loved, and THE SHIP FROM ATLANTIS, which I could have easily done without. The first is an interesting idea: Merlin and a few Romanized Britons escape from the Roman collapse of the island to the Americas, where they built a nation -- two nations, in fact -- among the Indians. In the sequel, Merlin's godson starts a long and rather pointless journey, primarily intended to get him involved with various wonders. But it's only half as long as the original, so better take both than neither. KING OF THE WORLD'S EDGE is worth the price.

SHIPS TO THE STARS, by Fritz Leiber [Ace, \$1.50] One of my problems with Leiber is that I seldom agree with the ideas he expects his readers to espouse, at least for the duration of the story. "The Ship Sails At Midnight" is an excellent story, but it's based on the rightness of universal love. I'm not sure what the idea is behind "Dr. Kometevsky's Day," except perhaps a fairy tale, but it makes for a remarkably dumb story. "The Enchanted Forest" is a minor classic, and it's based on the advantage of a planned society. There are three easily forgettable tales included: "The Big Trek," "Deadly Moon," and "The Snowbank Orbit." Overall: mediocre.

THE SINS OF THE FATHERS, by Stanley Schmidt [Berkley, \$1.25] In case you didn't read it in Analog a couple of years ago... I wonder if Schmidt has considered donning the mantle of "World-Wrecker" Ed Hamilton? This is a sort of combination of Ed's drastic methods with planets and galaxies and Doc Smith's concept of a visit from the neighbors. (Except that it's more modern and has a better scientific background than Hamilton, and reads much better than anything Smith ever did.) It's what might be called a grandiose concept. Very well done, and recommended.

THE FURIOUS FUTURE, by Algis Budrys [Quartet, 60p] Which, depending on the exact status of the pound when you read this, would be somewhere in the neighborhood of \$1. It contains 9 of Budrys' short stories: "Silent Brother," "Between The Dark and the Daylight," "And Then She Found Him," "The Skirmisher," "The Man Who Tasted Ashes," "Lower Than Angels," "Contact Between Equals," "Dream of Victory," and "The Peasant Girl." Original publication dates run from 1953 to 1958. These are primarily stories about people, not science. People in unusual situations, who have to think of a way out -- and who don't always make it. Budrys is one of the best writers in the field, and these stories show it. Recommended.

INTERSTELLAR EMPIRE, by John Brunner [DAW #208, \$1.50] Some of John's space-opera: "The Altar On Asconel," "The Man From The Big Dark," and "The Wanton of Argus," plus a short article describing how they came to be written and explaining some of their common background. (With 12 years between the earliest and latest story, I hadn't realized that they had any sort of common background.) These are mostly wild and woolly space-opera, but they're good enough of their type. I enjoyed them in the magazines, and I enjoyed them again here.

MARTIANS, GO HOME, by Fredric Brown [Ballantine, \$1.50] Fred Brown was one of the minor geniuses among science fiction writers of the late 1940s and early 1950s, and for some reason his stories haven't been reprinted as frequently as they should have been. He was basically a humorist, and this is his version of the Great Martian Invasion. It's must reading. And thanks to whoever at Ballantine had the idea of re-running the original Freas cover from the Analog version of the story; it's a perfect expression of the author's idea. (Or did you paint a new one, Kelly? I asked Juanita, and she thought that getting the shading that exact would be difficult, but nothing is impossible for Kelly Freas, of course.) Buy the book.

A GUIDE TO BARSOOM, by John Flint Roy [Ballantine, \$1.75] A small encyclopedia of place and personal names, flora and fauna, Barsoomian terminology and epigrams, religious customs and the alleged science used in Burroughs' Mars series, plus a geography, a thumbnail planetary history, and a brief biography of Burroughs. I suppose if you're really that interested in Barsoom, it would be quite useful. But I can't quite comprehend anyone being that interested.

THE DOOM THAT CAME TO SARNATH, by H.P. Lovecraft [Ballantine, \$1.50] A reasonably good sampling of Lovecraft's work, though none of his best -- or best-known -- stories are included. Everyone in fandom should really read some Lovecraft sometime, but like a lot of one-track authors, he's better if taken in small doses. Don't try to read the whole book at one sitting.

THE EARLY DEL REY, Vol. 2 [Ballantine, \$1.95] The rest of the stories from the Doubleday hardcover. The fiction runs from mediocre to good, and the background information (which takes up a fair amount of the book) is interesting. If you didn't get the hardcover, be sure and pick up the two paperbacks.

MARTIAN TIME-SLIP, by Philip K. Dick [Ballantine, \$1.50] Dick is enjoying himself with time-travel paradoxes and his usual assortment of neurotic characters here. A quote from Rolling Stone on the cover says it's about "schizophrenia and contemporary life...and the fragility of the systems of shared assumptions that hold human society together." Actually, that's what most of Dick's books are about, particularly the fragility of shared assumptions. (He finds them much more fragile than I do, probably because his keep changing and mine don't.) Anyway, this is a book for the new breed of college-stf-course fans.

THE IMMORTAL OF WORLD'S END, by Lin Carter [DAW #210, \$1.25] Swords and sorcery, set in the future rather than in the past. It's pretty typical of Carter's work -- not bad enough to be funny, not good enough to be interesting.

INHERITORS OF EARTH, by Gordon Eklund and Poul Anderson [Pyramid, \$1.25] But mostly by Eklund. I reviewed the hardcover a while back and said don't bother; the same advice goes for the pb.

SPACE 1999: PHOENIX OF MEGARON, by John Rankine [Pocket Books, \$1.50] Someone said the pb series is no longer simply novelizing the scripts. Since I quit watching the show after the first episode, I hadn't noticed that. There doesn't seem to be all that much improvement in the books. Not recommended.

SPECTRUM OF A FORGOTTEN SNN, by E.C. Tubb [DAW #219, \$1.25] #15 in the Dumarest series. I'm glad Tubb has a nice steady income, but I wish he'd do something else once in a while. He can write outstanding science fiction -- but he doesn't, very often. If you like series, you might like this. Nice cover by Feibush.

THE ADVENTURES OF JULES DE GRANDIN, by Seabury Quinn [Popular Library, \$1.25]

THE CASEBOOK OF JULES DE GRANDIN, by Seabury Quinn [Popular Library, \$1.25]

THE SKELETON CLOSET OF JULES DE GRANDIN, by Seabury Quinn [Popular Library, \$1.25]

THE DEVIL'S BRIDE, by Seabury Quinn [Popular Library, \$1.25]

Jules de Grandin, the little French detective of the supernatural, was a mainstay of Weird Tales for years. He's obviously inspired by Sherlock Holmes, but his Frenchness -- even the stereotyped Frenchness of a pulp hero -- is sufficient to make him

a distinct individual. The stories are, by and large, well-plotted (though reading four books of them at a sitting tends to make them seem more than a little monotonous; don't read them that way.) The first three titles here include a total of 20 stories, plus introductions by Lin Carter, Robert A. W. Lowndes, and Manly Wade Wellman. **THE DEVIL'S BRIDE** is a novel, the only novel in the series, if memory serves. Characterization is mostly in stereotypes, but some of them are quite vivid stereotypes. There aren't that many different supernatural menaces, but Quinn manages a good variety. One the whole, these are entertaining fiction, and recommended. Even with an overdose of them, I enjoyed them.

THE SHATTERED CHAIN, by Marion Zimmer Bradley [DAW #191, \$1.50] A big fat Darkover novel, 280 pages of it. As usual with Marion's stuff, the characters become interesting to the reader, which is a knack that all too many sf writers never learn. I object to the psychology of one of the heroines: that one's reactions to the opposite sex are conditioned by one's culture (to the point that the heroine automatically chooses to marry one man, because he's the only one around who fits her conditioning -- and it doesn't work out because on a personal level they're unsuited). Oh sure, I'll grant that it happens, but Marion implies a more or less universal rule and I keep thinking about thousands of cross-cultural marriages, from John Rolfe and Pocahontas to WhatsHerName who married the ruler of Sikkim. But however much I disagree with the psychology, I enjoyed the book. It covers the Darkovan Women's Libbers, the Free Amazons. It's in three sections, and (interestingly) the only heroine I couldn't sympathize with was the Earth agent, Magda Lorne, who is depicted as pretty much of an emotional mess. But by the time she came on the scene, I wanted to find out what happened to the rest of the characters. (And the point of the novel -- shown as well as proclaimed -- is TANSTAAFL, and that each of us must choose what price we prefer to pay. I wonder how many of Marion's readers also like Heinlein?)

ALDAIR IN ALBION, by Neal Barrett, Jr [DAW #1.95, \$1.25] A very interesting adventure novel which rather falls apart at the conclusion. The philosophy should have been better spaced, and not dumped in all at once at the end, and too many of the loose ends are tied up hastily and offstage. I'd have been happier, too, if the alleged "mystery" which runs through the book hadn't been maintained by the adamant refusal of everyone concerned to tell the hero anything specific (while inundating him with hints), even when it would have been to their own benefit to do so. But the backgrounds and cultures depicted are interesting, and the basic idea is good, if only it had been concealed a bit more aptly. It's a good lightweight adventure novel, and recommended; it's just that it had possibilities of becoming a classic, and they weren't realized. As it is, it's entertaining but not to be taken seriously.

PERILOUS DREAMS, by Andre Norton [DAW #196, \$1.25] Alternate worlds, the gimmick being that they can be controlled by "dreamers" who produce them for entertainment. Except, of course, in every case there is some reason for them getting stuck in their own dreams. "Toys of Tamisen" was in *IF* a while back; it's a good adventure novelet and takes up not quite half the book. "Ship of Mist" is a continuance of the Tamisen story. "Get Out of My Dream" and "Nightmare" are short stories with similar backgrounds -- and similar plots, rather unfortunately; they're a bit too much like reading "Tamisen" over again, not quite so well done. But overall, it's a good fantasy buck. That's the poorest Barr cover I've seen for some time, though.

OR ALL THE SEA WITH OYSTERS, by Avram Davidson [Pocket Books, \$1.25] Avram's imagination is a little strange -- and he's one of the best short-story writers in or out of the field. The combination is irresistible. This contains 18 of his stories, and if you didn't read the 1962 Berkley edition, go out and buy this one. You won't get this quality of writing -- or this sort of zany humor -- anywhere else.

THE HORDE, by Joseph Green [Laser #27, 95 cents] Marooned on a jungle island with savages...well, on an alien planet with natives, then. Hero and one of the enemy are stranded together and must work together to survive. And of course they gradually learn to admire one another's strengths and to try to stop the warfare between

their species. Competent but predictable.

THE SKIES DISCROWNED, by Timothy Powers [Laser #28, 95 cents] A painter is accidentally involved in the political intrigues of a feudal society. Quite adequate action-adventure; don't look for deep meanings and you'll probably enjoy it.

THE SEEKER, by David Bischoff and Christopher Lampton [Laser #30, 95 cents] Alien contact with lots of religious symbolism. (Fairly elementary symbolism; even I understood it.) All right if you like that sort of thing, but a bit too much sweetness add light for my taste.

THEN BEGGARS COULD RIDE, by Ray Nelson [Laser #32, 95 cents] I think I'd have liked this one better if Ray hadn't explained in the introduction that the background is his idea of utopia. Because it's a long way from mine, and the thought kept intruding while I was reading it. The world is split up into thousands of little independent enclaves, each one designed after a particular era (factual or fictional -- or, in some cases, both). And presumably one can live in any era he chooses (except that since our hero doesn't even know what the different localities are until he wanders into them, I don't quite see how one chooses). Anyway, the hero, for one reason or another, wanders through a batch of them; sometimes with companions, sometimes with the police after him, and eventually finds his proper setting. Interesting enough if you can believe any of it while you're reading it; I couldn't. Give it a try anyway; maybe you can.

THE SEAS OF ERNATHE, by Jeffrey Carver [Laser #34, 95 cents] Culture clash between mechanically-inclined Earthmen and otherwise-inclined natives. Not exactly psi powers; Carver has an original idea on alien senses. He doesn't always explain it too well, but he makes a fair try. Interesting.

I, ALEPPO, by Jerry Sohl [Laser #35, 95 cents] Scientific gadgetry which can make contact with the creatures of dreams -- and accidentally materialize one, to the discomfiture of the scientists, since the dream creature is malefic and possessive. Interesting idea, though again I had problems in suspending my disbelief. Reminiscent of L. Ron Hubbard and SLAVES OF SLEEP, though Hubbard did a better job.

JEREMY CASE, by Gene DeWeese [Laser #36, 95 cents] I hate wishy-washy heroes, so I wasn't all that thrilled with this one. But the story of an ordinary, not too bright human who discovers that he is in most respects a superhero, is well handled. The one thing that doesn't improve is his intelligence; he can heal the sick but he's gullible enough to fall for any old line that's handed him. (Recommended particularly to Lee Hoffman; you should love it.) And he's got a real problem. What would you do if you discovered that you could heal any disease by a "laying on of hands"? Think about our society and then think about how you would use your gift.

THE MEDDLERS, by J.F. Bone [Laser #37, \$1.25] First of the "new" Lasers, with a higher price, different cover design, and greater emphasis of the book number for readers who want the whole series. Bone is a pretty good adventure writer; this one of hero and heroine foisting civilization onto a barbaric planet so they can repair their ship and get off it isn't one of his best, but it's entertaining enough. Recommended for light reading.

BUT WHAT OF EARTH?, by Piers Anthony and Robert Coulson [Laser #44, \$1.25] To begin with, Piers wants it known that it's not his manuscript and it was published over his protest. Okay. It's not entirely my manuscript, either. Judging by the handwritten notes on Piers' copy, I was the fourth person to try to revise it (and apparently the first one who succeeded), but an anonymous Laser copy-editor made some extensive changes after I turned it in. (The last three pages, for example, don't really belong to either Piers or me; neither does the extensive use of metric terms. In fact, I protested the latter; I didn't and don't think most Laser readers would know a hectare from a hexagon.) There are numerous other interpolations. I don't particularly care; Piers does. As for quality, it's acceptable but it's not one of Laser's

better offerings, despite the quantity of authors. Not recommended.

THE REALM OF PRESTER JOHN, by Robert Silverberg [remaindered, \$2.98] Since Prester John was identified, at one time or another, with most of the rulers in Asia and even in Ethiopia from the 12th Century to the 16th, this book is a fairly extensive 400-year history of two continents. The various Christian emissaries to the court of Prester John (in various areas) are traced, as is the mythology of St. Thomas's mission to India. (Which ended with one skeleton of St. Thomas where he was originally buried, and another one where he was reinterred. God works in mysterious ways.) All the variants of the Prester John legend are given, and traced as well as possible to their sources. An excellent book, if you run across a copy; I found it far superior to Silverberg's science fiction.

THE DOLL WITH OPAL EYES, by "Jean" DeWeese [Doubleday, \$5.95] A fairly standard gothic for most people; I tended to snicker over the Tuckerizing included. (This is the one in which Gene kills off Thomas Stratton on page 4, and a good many of the bit players are people I know, or have heard Gene talk about.) It has a fairly good plot for a gothic, though the basic idea seemed a trifle elderly. If anyone out there has a report on it from a confirmed gothic reader, let me know. (And editor Sharon Jarvis will be out for my blood, since it's not a "gothic"; it's a "novel of romantic suspense". Which as far as I can tell is a gothic in hard covers.)

DUTCH UNCLE, by Marilyn Durham [remaindered, \$1.00] A moderately amusing Western, in which a gambler and gunman finds himself saddled with a couple of Mexican orphans, which despite all his attempts he can't get rid of. And there's an old girl-friend who despite all his attempts won't become a mistress. And some stolen money that everyone is looking for unsuccessfully. Watch for the pb.

THE DARK STAR, by Robert W. Chambers [secondhand] A pair of romances from the THE CAPTAIN OF THE KANSAS, by Louis Tracy [secondhand] first couple of decades of the Century. I had some hope that the Chambers novel might turn out to be a fantasy; it didn't. It's a spy novel, written with a fair amount of humor. The Tracy book is a jungle island romance, written without any humor at all. I rather enjoyed them, but I have low taste in some areas.

THE LUSITANIA, by Colin Simpson [Ballantine, \$1.95] A new book on the disaster, written from the currently fashionable viewpoint that everything that happens is part of a plot. It got rather short shrift in American Heritage because of this. Yet, discounting the mythical "plot" (supposedly masterminded by Winston Churchill to bring the U.S. into the war), it seems to be a quite accurate account, if read carefully. (Simpson differentiates between the facts and his own suppositions, but the reader must be able to make the same distinction.) The facts are enough for an interesting book; ignore Simpson's theories.

MIDWAY, by A. J. Barker [Ballantine, \$1.95] I believe this first appeared as part of the Ballantine "Illustrated History" series; it's now been reissued as a regular pb, but is still heavily illustrated. It's a popular battle; we have Ballantine's first book about it, by Mitsuo Fuchida and Masatake Okumiya, and INCREDIBLE VICTORY, by Walter Lord. And, of course, there are numerous articles; Fletcher Pratt included it in THE BATTLES THAT CHANGED HISTORY, and most other military historians have had a shot at it. Barker does one of the better jobs, and the photos are an advantage (though the Illustrated History edition, with larger photos, might well be preferable). Recommended.

SHARKS AND LITTLE FISH, by Wolfgang Ott [Ballantine, \$1.75] A novel about German naval warfare in World War II. There's a commentary note by Hans Hellmut Kirst in the blurbs, which is not surprising; it's a naval counterpart of many of Kirst's novels. Like most sailors, Ott's characters are interested mostly in women, drink, and staying alive long enough to enjoy more women and drink, but the naval situation is against them. Much is made on the cover and blurb about submarine warfare, but the protagonist (again in the Kirst tradition) spends most of the book in an old

trawler converted to a minesweeper. It's realistic and a little grisly.

HOUDINI: THE UNTOLD STORY, by Milbourne Christopher [Pocket Books, \$1.75] A reprint; first pb publication in 1970. Christopher, a magician himself, does a good job of this biography of Houdini's life with an emphasis on his escapes and tricks. At over 300 pages, it's a bit more about Houdini's methods and successes than I really cared about, but it's certainly thorough. Recommended to anyone interested in stage magic.

THE SEARCH FOR BIG FOOT, by Peter Byrne [Pocket Books, \$1.75] Another thick one. Despite being newer, it really doesn't tell all that much more about Bigfoot than does the Ivan Sanderson pb that appeared a few years ago, and Sanderson is a more entertaining writer than Byrne. But it's satisfactory if you're interested in the subject, and Byrne has actually participated in Bigfoot hunts and can provide first-hand information. And he tries hard not to be gullible, which helps.

VALLEY FORGE, by MacKinlay Kantor [Ballantine, \$1.95] A Bicentennial novel. It's a reasonably good one, though I think Kantor has done better. It's a good attempt to show what the Revolutionary Army was like at its low point. It's a sort of montage; brief incidents shown from widely varying viewpoints. Not my favorite form of writing, but fairly successful.

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S EXPENSE ACCOUNT, by Marvin Kitman [Ballantine, \$1.95] The other side of the Bicentennial coin. Kitman, a radical humorist, has simply taken Washington's account books and explained them. The attitude is one of humorous debunking, but in most cases the facts speak quite plainly for themselves. (And not always -- though usually -- the way Kitman sees them.) Recommended.

BITTER JOURNEY, by Lee Leighton [Ballantine, \$1.25] Leighton tries to do a more or less adult Western, with less shooting and more depth to the characters. I don't think he succeeds, but it's not bad. Above average for a Western.

THE HOUSE AT LUXOR, by Florence Stevenson [Signet, \$1.25] A fairly straight gothic, coupling an ancient family scandal with a modern legacy. Like most of Stevenson's books, there is a genuine fantasy element; reincarnation and/or possession. But the humor is, regrettably, held to a minimum. For the Stevenson fans among the readership.

INHERIT THE MIRAGE, by "Julia Thatcher" [Ballantine, \$1.25] Like the last "Thatcher" book, this is somewhat fascinating. I get the impression that the author wasn't taking himself all that seriously, because this is a feminist parody of a terribly familiar adventure plot, immortalized in THE PRISONER OF ZENDA and GRAUSTARK. (It's not as funny as Fraser's parody in the "Flashman" series; the genre wouldn't stand for it. Ostensibly, it's quite serious; but I detect evidences of a tongue firmly planted in the cheek. Such as the grownup Katzenjammer Kids who wander through the plot.) It was fun to read.

CAVE OF THE MOANING WIND, by "Jean" DeWeese [Ballantine, \$1.25] Nobody uses his right name on a Ballantine gothic... A straight gothic, set in Alaska, and with a fantasy element. Good enough, but nothing special about it from my point of view except the author.

SHEBA SLEPT HERE, by Alan Caillou [remaindered, \$1.49] People like Caillou tend to make me feel inferior. He was a British Intelligence agent in WWII, captured and escaped twice, has been a police chief in Ethiopia and Somaliland, a white hunter, a movie and tv actor, and is now a movie and tv director and author of a series of popular adventure novels. SHEBA concerns his two years as Chief of British Reserved Areas Police in Ethiopia immediately after the war, when the British administered some of the former Italian territories in Africa while the U.N. wrangled over what to do with them. Mostly he sticks to the amusing details; he's not a brilliantly humorous writer like Gerald Durrell, but he has produced a very interesting and sometimes funny book, with looks at various fascinating characters. ("I noticed, admir-

ingly, that some of the police from the outlying stations, who were really bushmen in uniform, found it just as easy to bite the tops off the bottles, spitting out the broken glass on the floor, under their bare feet.")

TO QUEBEC AND THE STARS, by H. P. Lovecraft (Don Grant, \$15.00) While researching for his Lovecraft biography, de Camp unearthed these fanzine articles of Lovecraft's. Not being one to waste effort, he has turned them into a book which will undoubtedly be snapped up by Lovecraft fans (they'd buy Lovecraft's old laundry lists if any survived to be published). The book is the usual excellent Grant production; large size, with over 300 pages and a good solid binding. About 2/3 of it is taken up with a previously unpublished article on the history and a current description (well, current for 1930, when it was written) of the city of Quebec. If one can ignore the preciously quaint writing style, it's an excellent article, well worth reading if one has any interest at all in Quebec. Two other short travel articles are also good. There are 40 pages of science articles, which are mostly descriptions of the sky at specific times; they were written for the astronomy column of a newspaper. Well enough written, but not of abiding interest. The rest of the book consists of Lovecraft's opinions of literature, poetry, and philosophy; of interest to hardened Lovecraft fans and academics, and not of much use to anyone else. They do underscore the idea that Lovecraft didn't know much about people, though. Overall, of interest to Lovecraft fans and anyone interested in slightly dated travelogues, of which latter group I may count myself an insignificant and perhaps inappetent member. (Don't complain about that last sentence; I thought about doing the entire review in that style.)

THE WESTERN ART OF FREDERIC REMINGTON (Ballantine, \$5.95) One of their odd-sized (11" x 9 1/2") art books. There is a sort of historical critique of Remington's work by Matthew Baigell, followed by 46 full-color reproductions of Remington paintings. Six black-and-white pictures and a photo of Remington are scattered through the critique. The critique is full of modern psychological interpretations, sometimes to the detriment of facts. ("It is as if a giant lawnmower had removed most of the plants and trees before Remington arranged his figures" - very nice, except that in a lot of the scenery depicted, there weren't any trees and damned few plants until the trees were planted and the land irrigated, long after Remington painted.) I suppose the analysis may be generally correct, but I don't put much faith in it. The paintings themselves are well reproduced; they include most of Remington's best-known work along with quite a few that are seldom presented. All in all, an excellent book. (Of course, I happen to be a fan of Remington's art, so I'm prejudiced.)

THE UNIVERSE MAKERS, by Don Wollheim (Gollancz, £1.50) Which, depending on the state of the pound and international postage rates, would set you back about \$3.00 US; maybe a little less. It's a thin book; 120 or so pages, and it contains Wollheim's personal opinions of the ideas in science fiction. Don is obviously an "idea" man; van Vogt's problems with the English language are dismissed as unimportant and he is presented as a brilliant sf author because of his ideas. Other writers are similarly characterized; their mastery of words and characters is secondary to the originality of their ideas. Which is fair enough; we already have plenty of books on the writing techniques and symbolism of sf. Occasionally Don gets into trouble; at one point he says that Campbell's ASTOUNDING had no social ideas, and a couple of pages farther on says that it had reactionary social ideas. (For all his interest in ideas, they must be "good" - which seems to mean 1940s liberal - in order to be acceptable.) But it's an interesting set of opinions, and worth the money.

SPICY MYSTERY STORIES (Odyssey Publications, \$4.50) Two more of
STRANGE TALES (Odyssey Pub, Box 71, Melrose Highlands, MA 02177, \$4.50) the reprints of rare magazines. SPICY is a reprint of the July 1936 issue; STRANGE is taken from two 1932 issues. SPICY featured stories that were "hot stuff" in 1936 and tend to be unintentionally funny today, though some of them have a rather quaint charm. STRANGE is better; dated, but featuring Jack Williamson, Edmond Hamilton, Clark Ashton Smith, and Robert E. Howard. The original illustrations are included; mediocre in the case of STRANGE, very bad in SPICY. Both mags feature supernatural horror fiction.

CRUMBLINGS

Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque NM 87107

These two latest issues remind me of the first issue of Y I saw, aye, heap many moons ago. By that I mean the back page falls off. In the olden days you did not, of course, use envelopes so I received that last page but nothing else.

Nostalgia and all that. Juanita, elder daughter, Diana, is working this summer at Homestead National Monument in Nebraska. A few acres of the original prairie which somehow missed getting plowed. Diana dresses in the costume of the last century (for which Uncle pays \$300 each...Oh, Pioneers!) and spends her days making candles and soap and cooking from scratch. She used to say that she thought it would have been fun to live in those days. She has changed her mind.

I imagine that a lot of today's communal idiots who go out and get back to the soil also change their minds.

One of the things that impressed me about Britain and Holland was the number of oooold buildings still in use. Modernized somewhat, to be sure, but still it is impressive to find structures 300 and 400 years old and still being lived in or worked in.

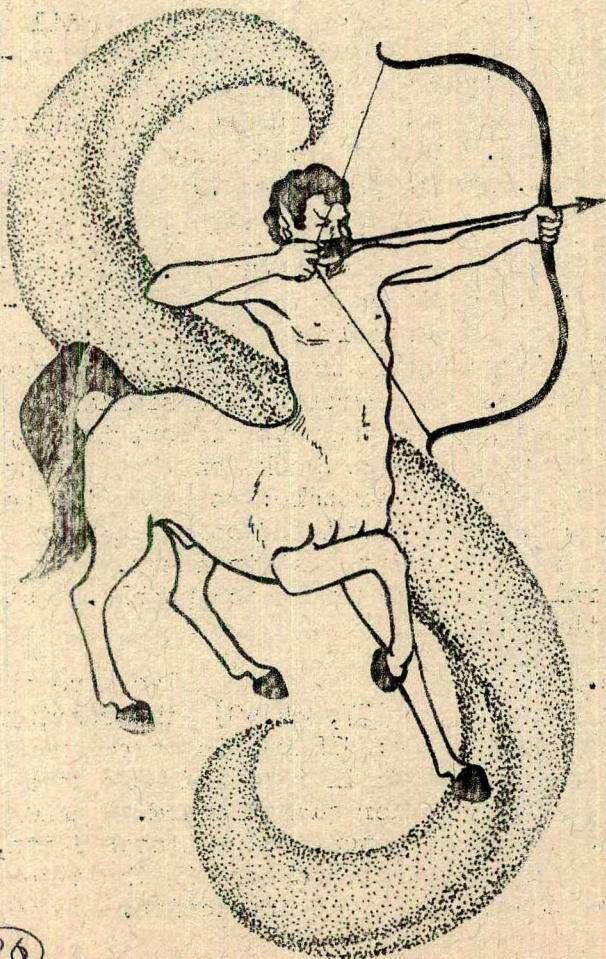
Not around these parts. Albuquerque had a number of old houses -- and a couple of hotels -- which dated back to the 1800s which were torn down and converted into parking lots. The last remaining old structure (outside of the church in Old Town) was a ratty warehouse which was in the process of being demolished when the historical

society stepped in to stop it. "We must preserve our history." So there is this half-demolished eyesore in the middle of downtown, deteriorating daily, while all the authorities stand around wondering what to do about it. The general feeling seems to be to go ahead and tear the damned thing down because it's too far gone to restore and certainly looks terrible the way it is.

Strange that you should not have any answers to today's problems of violence and mistrust and all that. I do. My simple answer is reduce the population. It is of my opinion that most of our problems stem from the simple fact that there are too many of us. (You wanna volunteer to start things off, Tackett?) You are more optimistic than I, Juanita. I don't think we'll muddle through.

Bruce: But of course most people do not read the paper. They read the headlines.

Which is why newspaper employ specialists who do nothing but write headlines. These people are handy for putting across a particular editorial viewpoint because a well-trained headline writer can present to those who only glance at headlines a meaning that is



180 degrees out of phase with the story itself. It is often done deliberately because editors know that there are vast numbers of people who do not read the complete stories. (Headline writers for the Albuquerque Journal enjoy sneaking in double entendres.)

What would be the "wrong idea" one could get about a book? Are you saying that it would be, maybe, one that is different from your own? Still it would depend a great deal on whose word you were taking about the book? I'll take Buck's word about a book because I've found that our viewpoints, while not completely convergent, are close enough that if he says "This book is a dog" I generally agree.

Ah, but that's the whole point. No one is really in charge, which is why we stumble from crisis to crisis, always hoping that things will turn out OK. And there is no way that the technocrats could band together to accomplish anything. There is too much professional and personal jealousy involved. I have been in the employ of the Yew Ess government for 30 years, give or take a few, and know that there is more counter-attacking going on between offices than there is cooperation.

You don't mind, do you, if I challenge your assumptions on "primitive societies"? You have to define your terms. What do you mean by "primitive society"?

The idea that scientists, and others, are something special isn't restricted to kids and stems, I suspect, from the ancient class distinctions of Europe. Which is, I should think, to be expected since most of the people in this country are the descendants of peasants. Which could lead to all sorts of interesting speculations, no? Like maybe the reason the reds haven't been successful here is because we have an inbred feeling that we shouldn't revolt against our betters. That's just a manner of speaking, of course. They're not my betters. Isn't it amazing how a two-bit politician can suddenly become the source of all knowledge simply by becoming the President?

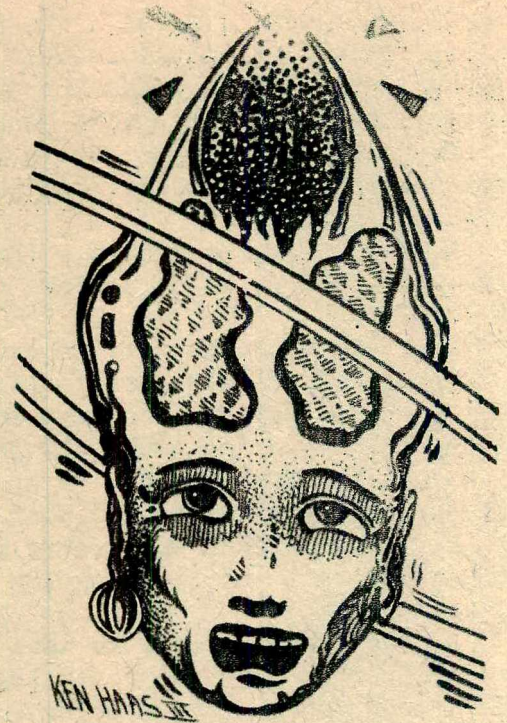
Buck, yeah, well I know a lot of people who "always vote for the man, not the party" provided the man belongs to the right party, of course. Did you hear that Jufus may actually vote for a Republican this year? Harrison Schmitt, ex-astronaut and moonwalker, is running for the Senate out here and has favorably impressed Speer. Along with a lot of other people. Not that it will make any difference in the outcome of the election. Our ~~senior~~ senior Senator, Joe Montoya, is running for re-election and on election night the votes from Rio Arriba county won't be counted until it is determined how many Joe needs.

Kay (how many editors are there on this zine, anyway...it's almost as confusing as Void), I wasn't aware that the campgrounds near Lassen were closed. Mt Baker in Washington, yeah, but Lassen? Now if they closed the campgrounds near Mt. Shasta, I could understand that...lots of mysterious goings on around Mt. Shasta.

Can't say that I agree with Salmonson's stereotypes. I'm a Heinlein fan and I don't hate war. Don't believe in astrology, either. I am tempted to say that Salmonson is mixed up. Yes. But I won't say that.

"Golden Minutes": Did you know that I am a footnote in the Japanese translation of McPhee's CURVE OF BINDING ENERGY? True. Takumi translated it into Japanese and wrote to me for the answers to a couple of questions of which I was duly given credit at the bottom of a page. Strange that most of my literary credits are in Japan.

Richard Mooney, you know, also did that COLONY EARTH thingee where he presented substantially the same arguments. That one contained the startling statement that the Great Pyramid could not be built today. No way the Egyptians can get their hands



on 100,000 Jews, I guess. The thing about these books is that the authors have all these "facts" but never seem to have any sources. I recall the NOVA program on the Bermuda Triangle in which the investigator found that the various proponents of the mystery were simply quoting each other.

Dunno why Eisenstein should be bemused by the Tomb of the Unknowns. After all, Joe Gibson buried his Astoundings in Albuquerque's west mesa. Somewhere. He can't remember where.

Hoffman seems to indicate that writers of Westerns have almost as high an opinion of their readers as do writers of porn. Or science fiction readers of science fiction writers...

You, old Buck, may refuse to comment on Florence Stevenson's letter but I won't. I wouldn't say she was certifiable...just deluded. My mother was a "psychic" and had all sorts of psychic contacts and was able to foretell the future and all that goes along with it. She would always tell me of the things she saw and the like. Trouble was that I was never able to see any of them for myself. Despite being pretty well steeped in alleged psychic phenomena for many years I remain an unbeliever.

Hey, yeah, FERAL was pretty good. I found another more or less on the same theme. THE DOGS. All about dogs going wild and having a great time killing people and the like.

Anybody care to tell me what a "muber of guns" is?

Hell, I thought you could legislate intelligence. Considering the way various legislatures decree that everybody is entitled to admission to state universities regardless of abilities I figured that they were just passing bills and making everybody smart.

Dunno why Gary complains about government employees being compared to convicted felons. Both are living off the government...I've been doing it for years.

Disagree with CD Doyle's statement that television has nothing to do directly with kids's ability to read. Think it does. Where formerly Mom would gather Junior up on her lap and read to him she now plops him down in front of the tube. Motivation gets lost there.

Anna Schoppenhorst talks of school uniforms. Welll, most of the kids I see in school seem to be dressed pretty much alike.

Finished VELIKOVSKY RECONSIDERED today. A collection of papers by the editors of something or other. 25 years ago I dismissed Velikovsky out of hand. Considering all that's been discovered about the solar system in the past ten years, nowadays I'm not so sure.

[[You may fall by the wayside, but Asimov and I are still sure about Velikovsky.

But did your mother foretell the future accurately? That would seem to be the major test, and you didn't say. How the hell many Moms ever "would gather Junior up on her lap and read to him"? Damn few. I got read to, as a kid, Bruce did, possibly most fans did. But very few of my classmates had ever been read to. There was no way to read to the kids; most of those homes didn't contain any reading material, not even a Bible. RSC]]

Maggie Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Road, Mentor OH 44060

I've long felt that a revolution, if it comes, will be aimed at the experts (she said, reminded of it by Bruce's Column). We and everyone else tend to depend on expert advice (brush your teeth with the toothbrush with the stiffest bristles, we were told for years and years and years -- until they decided that damaged the teeth and you should brush with the softest bristles you can find). We had been working and experimenting with low-electricity use. When we went to California for two weeks, we unplugged everything (clocks and all). All that operated were water heater (turned as low as possible), freezer, refrigerator, one timed light, one fluorescent light, and two night lights. Our bill for the month was less than \$4.50 less than that for the month before. We wrote (with considerable indignation) to the electric company; our bill was around \$45. They sent around a nice young man who explained that we are on a special billing plan, since we had had a water heater bought at a time when the

electric company was offering a special inducement to (1) people who bought electric water heaters or (2) people who had all-electric homes. (The offer is not made any longer, by the way, but the company is stuck with those who took advantage of it while it was in force.) What this means, said the nice young man, is that, once we reach a certain cut-off point (easily reached, thanks to the energy-gobbling water heater), we get our power at an incredible discount. "Gee," he said, "you get electricity so cheaply, you ought to consider heating your house with a heat pump. I think you'd save money you're spending now with oil heat." And, he concluded, we could give up trying to cut power consumption; nothing we could do would begin to bring down our bills noticeably. We asked about the benefits of switching power to heat water. But to what? Gas is running out and oil -- Well, our (oil) heating bills have doubled with less use in the last couple of years...

Tsk, Buck, there are thousands of law made in order to prevent deaths resulting from stupidity -- beginning with laws that one must drive well enough to pass a driving test before driving alone. It does not remove all stupid drivers from the road. It does not remove all drivers who cannot drive well enough to pass a driving test. But (1) it removes some, (2) it encourages receiving proper training, (3) it offers a trophy which is a prized sign of adulthood (a driver's license), giving motivation for passing that test, and (4) it provides a grounds on which those who disobey that law can be punished/treated/deprived of easy means of repeating the stupidity. In this world, the partial solution is all too frequently ignored or sneered at. In this world of imperfection, partial solutions are just about all we've got.

And laws to protect people from other people's stupidity are needed and do help -- though not as well as the elimination of stupidity. Until someone works out how to eliminate stupidity, though, we need those laws that will cut down on (never eliminate) deaths resulting from stupidity.

[[The number of drivers who can't pass a driving test is minuscule, and a good share of those are crippled rather than stupid. The killers are the drivers who know all the rules but figure that they don't need to bother with them. The ones who emote instead of thinking. The ones who receive proper training and don't bother to use it. As for being deprived of easy means of repeating the stupidity -- perhaps they can be, but they aren't. (Did you know that this state's standard penalty for driving while one's license is suspended is a further suspension? Big deal.) RSC]]

Florence Stevenson, 227 E. 57th Street, New York NY 10022

Thanks for such a nice long letter. How do you do it with all your correspondence? You are practically the one person I write to. I stopped writing to people years ago when I once wrote a letter to my late father and stepmother, saying with some braggadocia, save this, you can sell it for the autograph one day. I was kidding, but they took me seriously and were so outraged that I gave up writing to them, and practically to anyone else. No doubt Fraud would have something to say about that.

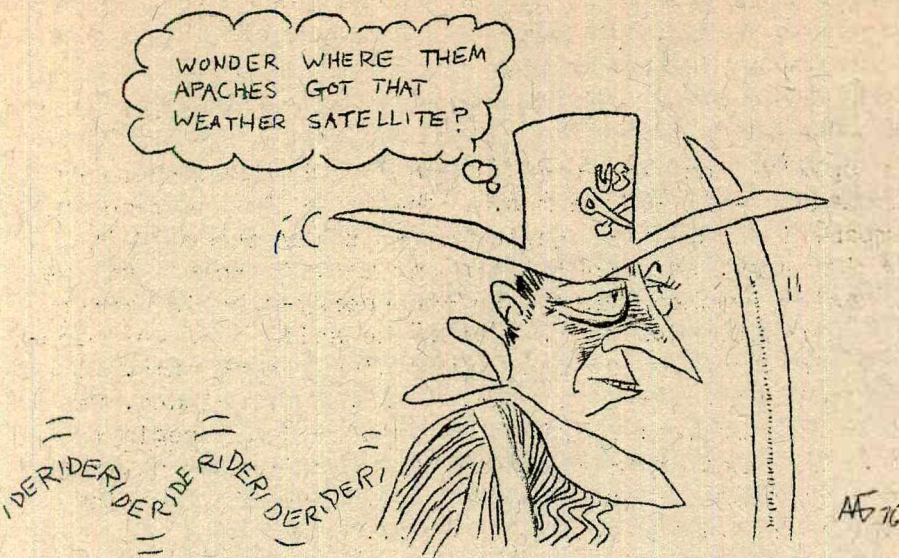
Well, since I am launched in a letter: (you don't have to print that stuff about Harold Stern if you don't want to. I was all upset about him when I wrote, am since calmer, but I still believe in my psychic powers. I am able to predict the future for people, because it has been proven by all sorts of people calling me up and marveling about things I've said.

In about 12 days, I am off to the continent of Europe, with ideas of going to Scotland (definite) and hobnobbing with the Loch Ness Monster (indefinite) and possibly (very indefinite) going to Russia. I am covering the Edinburgh Music Festival for Opera News, High Fidelity-Musical America, the Carnegie Hall program and the monster for Youthbeat magazine -- a new supplement which will hit papers about Oct. or Nov.

At least one of the joys of writing a historical is that the heroine can spell s-x, spell it and do it, instead of shrieking and running back to her ivory tower until the knot is tired. In historical, they seem to be caught in webs instead of knots. My heroine is going to lose her virginity at 14; how do you like them apples?

(She's married at 12; those were the good old days before women were liberated.)

[[The good old days aren't so far back; for a while I worked with a woman who was married at age 13 or so. Pleasant, pretty, probably more intelligent than average in that place. I thought she was in her mid-20s, so when she was talking to another woman about her upcoming fifteenth wedding anniversary I thought she was kidding; she wasn't, and she was just a trifle older than I thought: 28 or 29. Came from Texas,



as I recall. // I'm saving your letters for resale when you get famous, if that helps. (And I'm doing my best to hurry up the process.) RSC]]

Maydene Crosby, 7333 St Rd 25 N, Lafayette IN 47905

I just finished grocery shopping. Ouch. At the bookstand, I noticed several ZODIAC GOTHICS on sale, among them one by a "Jean De Weese" (which I suspect is Gene DeWeese in fairyland), but no sign (oops! sorry) of one by Juanita. If you folks have any copies, hold 2 or 3 for me; I know some women who read the things; make nice presents for them. With the snotty little note accompanying, you know "I am personally..." (cof, cof) "acquainted with the author of this excellent novel." (cof, cof.)

Frank, (one of the ex's who helps make me your favorite ex-wife) was here yesterday evening to check up on the working of the furnace. He left me a note, the first sentence of which momentarily croggled me. (The note was handwritten, and there is only one type of handwriting -- a physician's, on a prescription -- more indecipherable than an engineer's.) The sentence, at first reading, said: "I have left you a URINE glass."

Now, you must understand; I have just completed 7 1/2 hours' work getting out "Dear Friend" letters asking for contributions to Saint Elizabeth Hospital's Building Fund, and I am tired, and the writing is ex-hubby's usual scrawl, and I haven't seen an example of it in a year, and I've got out of the way of deciphering it...

There is also this LARGE CONTAINER on the kitchen table. Upon inspection, it appears to be filled with newspaper. It takes me fully 5 minutes to scrabble around in the contents and make contact with ONE WINE GLASS.

James Tiptree, Jr., PO Box 315, McLean VA 22101

Just a rumble from my cave to tell you I found quite particular pleasure in No. 327. The fannish stereotypes by Amos S. were convulsing. I also agree completely with JWC's remarks on the older rural US life-ways -- as a kid I knew them well -- and how few urban types would really relish the unremitting labour involved.

But what really animated my slow bones to this was acute disagreement with your brief review of Tanith Lee's DON'T BITE THE SUN. Your remarks made me read it in hopes of finding new juicy awfulness about teen-agers, which is more or less how you described it.

Instead I found a very serious tale of a "compulsorily teen-aged" girl trying desperately to grow up in a wildly artificial society where she's supposed to be freaky. And then she finds that the lives and "work" of the older people are meaningless, too,

and gets out into the deserts around the perfectly-run domes and tastes reality. (The "sun"). And is wounded in the vitals by the unreality of her available life. The whole future world and the weird outside are well-imagined, too.

Lee seems to be concerned with meanings and necessities in life, a far cry from the tenor of your note. Maybe you didn't finish it.

I've also been reading Vonda McIntyre's THE EXILE WAITING where there's an even more impressive job of imagining a world. This one very full of pain.

Assuming Lee is female, I'm going to venture a sexist hypothesis about women in sf: Based on no statistics but a nagging hunch, they seem on the average to do a better and more imaginative job of designing totally alien cultures. (OK, start with Norton and McCaffrey.) And they're very un-self important about it, that is, for the setting of one or two tales they'll work up a complete dream-world, throwing away off-hand choice items that some male confreres would build a whole big point on. Look at the dread asshole of the ecology -- the place where the corpses wash up -- in McIntyre's EXILE. Horrendous, a necessary feature of the imaginary world, too, but used only as a heart-chilling episode.

Anyway, there's my wildly-untested hypothesis for the day.

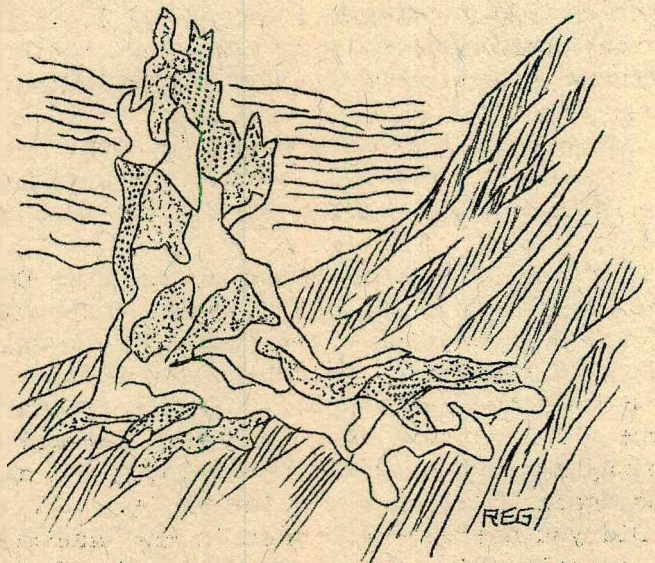
[[Partly my failure to be explicit enough -- I let "vivid" cover too much territory; partly the fact that the current literary absorption with "reality" annoys me, particularly if the protagonist has to go outside his society to find it. RSC]]

Robert E. Briney, 4 Forest Avenue, Salem MA 01970

In your reviewlet of Offutt's SWORD OF THE GAEL you mention that R. E. Howard's name appears on the cover in larger print than Offutt's. It is even worse in Zebra's advertising for the book, in which Offutt isn't mentioned at all. The same thing happened with Karl Edward Wagner's LEGION FROM THE SHADOWS, also a Howard continuation.

And in the review of the Asey Mayo book you mention the swan boats in the Boston Public Garden and sayd, "I'll bet these haven't been around for years." On the contrary, they are one of the perennial summer attractions of Boston, refurbished each year and in constant use from June to September. It was only by exercise of great firmness that I avoided taking my first ride on one of them a couple of weeks ago. Some friends were in town and spending a day on the obligatory tourist bit. After ascending to the top of the Prudential tower and gazing out at the smog-shrouded city, we walked a couple of blocks to look at the scaffolding holding Trinity Church together (which has been there ever since the John Hancock Insurance Co. built a sky-scraper right across the street and caused the bedrock beneath the church to shift...). Then on to the Public Garden where, after crawling across the ditches where new sewer lines are being installed, we reached the swan boats. The kids were insistent, and succeeded in dragging their reluctant parents onto the boats; I was content to watch from the bridge over the pond.

The Public Garden, with or without swan boats, is actually one of the most pleasant spots in the city, perfect for strolling amid trees and flowers (well kept), or simply sitting in the shade.



Joe L. Hensley, 2315 Blackmore, Madison In 47250

I've had a problem on RIVERTOWN RISK, which is due out right after the first of the year. They changed printed page count from 180 to 192 and so it didn't run long enough. I had a note from Michele and did some chaptering on it and maybe that'll straighten it out for them -- at least will hope so.

They're buying A KILLING IN GOLD based on outline and 40 pages. It's my coin and paper money suspense novel with Honest Donald Robak back again in the hands of HJH. HJH being me.

[[Increased wordage does cause problems occasionally, doesn't it? Of course, Juanita has you beat; she has one where after turning in a 70,000 word manuscript, the publisher decided that it preferred 150,000. RSC]]

John Robinson, 1-101st Street, Troy NY 12180

Quit putting down Gervasio Gallardo. A friend of mine, and a member of Alfen, Albany Area Fandom, bought a dozen Gallardo paintings for \$3,000 and found them worth about \$7000 six months later.

Too bad your reviews of Pohl's works and editing came too late for me to use when Fred appeared on a local talk show; however, I did call in and bring up one bookstore employee's claim that a number of customers say they are never going to buy any more Delany after what they got in DHALGREN, and I told the Asimov/Delany story in which a friend and I were walking down the hall at Lunacon a couple of years ago when we came upon Isaac pinning Chip to the wall with conversation, and a gathering crowd of autographics awaited the Good Doctor's attention. "There's the World's Greatest Science Fiction Writers," my friend cried out, "hidden behind Isaac Asimov!" Who knows where the chase might have ended if not for the guard at the door to the Huckster Room.

[[Detective Comics #27 is worth \$1600, too; does that make it good art?]]

Brian Tannahill, Box 21622, Bergstrom AFB, TX 78743

You might be interested in looking at the book WINNING THROUGH INTIMIDATION, by Robert J. Ringer. The book is the story of Ringer's progression in the real estate business, and how he learned that he could make bigger commissions by putting himself in a position where the buyer and seller in a real estate deal feel he deserves a big commission. Well written, interesting, amusing.

You are right about small airplanes being different from commercial flights. Mainly they are a lot more fun. In a big jet like a 727 there's too much isolation from what's outside and I can't relate to being so many thousand feet above the ground. There's no such problem in a Cessna 172. What really makes me realize where I am, in these small planes with non-retractable landing gear, is looking down and seeing that wheel just hanging there not spinning.

[[Actually, I avoided Ringer's book, as I do all books that tell you how to make a million dollars in your spare time by using the author's system. This one is amusing, huh? I'll keep an eye open at the used-book stores.]]

Lee Hoffman, 350 N.W. Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte FL 33952

I really dug COLD COMFORT FARM, and would love to see it again. At the time I saw it, I was having a great deal of trouble receiving PBS. I had the antenna that came with the house, which was cut for the high end. The PBS station here is Channel 3 out of Tampa and I could only get it under unusual weather conditions. Last summer I got a new antenna and now I get it regularly, which is a great relief, considering the way network programming is going. I didn't see NOURISH THE BEAST. If it ever runs again, I'll make a point of it.

Did you notice the banner in the church in COLD COMFORT FARM? I have forgotten now exactly which scripture was on it, but it was one of the ones concerning "hemorrhoids" (hemorrhoids). One of those lovely little touches I enjoy so much. (And I

am a great fan of Alister Sim.)

Don't worry about seeing the movie CHINO for my sake. I don't make a nickel on ticket sales. Wait to catch it on TV if you want.

Dainis Bisenieks, 2633 Dupont Ave. S., Minneapolis MN 55408

On that remark in an earlier issue about the struggle with the Wombat book, I was going to ask (but forgot) if that was armed wombat or unarmed wombat.

[[Keep that up, and I'll co-author a book with you one of these days.]]

Joseph T. Major, 314 Jessie Avenue, Hopkinsville KY 42240

I have been thinking about the two Smith-Goldin "Family d'Alembert" novels, IMPERIAL STARS and STRANGLER'S MOON. They seem to share a common liability; the heroes are not suited to either the villains nor their assistants.

First the villains: Banion in IMPERIAL STARS seems to have used every means short of newspaper ads to advertise his location. I mean, he uses an anagram of his mother's name, lives on the planet she came from, has a special position that requires him to be on Earth. I'm surprised it took them sixty-seven years instead of sixty-seven centuries! As for Garst, there are easier ways to make money in a gambling resort than killing people, like using weighted dice.

As for the assistants, they seem to consist of Da Head and his daughter (question: should he involve such a close relative? It would seem to leave him open to blackmail.) and a staff of loyal-but-dumb lackeys all over the Empire. This bunch makes the "Plumbers" look like topnotch pros!

The d'Alemberts are nothing more than the standard Smith hero; the person with muscles of iron, nerves of steel, and a brain like lightning. Ball lightning, that is, because they're always saying "Ghu, I've been stupid!"

There are also some historical errors, like "hereditary nobility...had served mankind longest..." (IMPERIAL STARS, p. 75) The form of rule described is actually feudalism, which seems to have been unique to Europe and to only have lasted between eight and thirteen hundred years. The real candidate for "longest" is absolute monarchy, which was not only common but lasted in Egypt for four thousand years.

[[I haven't read the books (and I'm not going to unless I get free review copies, and maybe not then) but what's this about feudalism being "unique to Europe"? I'm sure the Japanese would be interested in that...]]

Gene DeWeese, 2718 N. Prospect Ave., Milwaukee WI 53211

You know how everyone was saying that "the one thing no sf story ever predicted was that millions of people would watch the first moon landing on tv"?

Well, I just accidentally found out it wasn't true. While shuffling all the magazines, etc., last week, I made the mistake of pulling out an old Amazing to look at. And I ended up reading/skiming the whole lead novel, ALL ABOARD FOR THE MOON, by Harold M. Sherman. (Remember THE GREEN MAN?) You can get an idea of the quality of the story from the opening paragraph: "Wilbur Williams, Hollywood press agent, had a problem. She was a gorgeous red-head who wanted to break into pictures." Come to think of it, the last paragraphs are a pretty good indication, too: "The Moon and the Martians seemed very far away in that moment -- and the Earth seemed very sweet." America's Number One Bachelor had surrendered his title."

All in all, approximately equal to KING DINOSAUR. The ship is built by private funds of "America's Number One Bachelor and Playboy", who is also the pilot. A pushy girl friend gets on board during the "prelaunch tour" of the control room, "accidentally" pushes the switch that makes them take off ahead of time, without a crew. Besides which, they run into invading Martians on the back of the Moon. (They're waiting for humans to destroy themselves so they can take over Earth. The only reason they're waiting is because humans have the atomic bomb, while the Martians don't. On the other hand, they've been "watching and waiting" for two hundred years. I didn't realize we'd had the bomb that long...)

But if nothing else, the landing on the moon was televised and watched by millions of people all over Earth. Not the first step on the moon, but the landing. They didn't have enough "technical crew" to televise the first step, altho the camera televised the landing on automatic and kept right on transmitting a picture of the cliff they almost crashed into for several hours while the entire "crew" was unconscious.

Enuf? I thought so.

But I wonder if we should let this get out? Someone might try to reprint it as a "classic that predicted televised moon landing", and then sf would really be in trouble.

[[I suppose another more-or-less correct prediction is something defensive fans can point to with pride, but did it have to be Harold Sherman? I don't think I ever skimmed anything of his all the way through (you have a stronger stomach than I do), but I recall from idle glimpses that he was one step down from Dwight V. Swain and Festus Pragnell as an author. RSC]]

Carolyn Doyle, 1949 N. Spencer, Indianapolis

IN 46218

Yandro may be one of the two or three fanzines

I know of that can make my legs feel better when they hurt.

Quite a lot of Rotsler thish, which pleases me greatly. I'm really beginning to dig Rotsler, along with Barry Kent McKay, Grant Canfield (the illo he did for Dave Locke's stationery is LOVELY! I like mice in all forms except real live), some Parks, and a few others here and there. I wish Kirk would quit getting nominated for fan artist in the Hugoes.

Commenting on Juanita's remark on the wariness of many people living in the country, my family keeps telling me I'm rather rude and unfriendly. This is only to people I have no interest in, like most of the fems at my HS. Anna zapped them with something that I think is still puzzling a few of them, so they're laying off her. In response to the typically teenage (ugh) question "Do you have a boyfriend?!", she replied, "No, I have no need of one." When they started giggling at that (they giggle at everything either of us says if we use a word that is composed of more than a syllable), she explained, "You see, I use a candle," or something similar. Fandom must be doing something to me; a year ago, I wouldn't have understood that comment. Evidently, none of these girls did, for a couple of days. Now it's getting all around school, and we're fast gaining a reputation of the two girls who talk too fast, act "uppity" (we don't faint every time a male goes past, and have stopped turning around to answer when one of the little group chosen to annoy us calls out names. It's only to ask some inane question that they do it, then laugh at us.), and use all them there big words. When you consider that I have a tiny vocabulary compared to nearly any fan, and Anna's is bigger than mine, this becomes scary.

I really can't see what the reason for all this fuss about porn is. As long as anyone under 18 is kept away, and can't see or get inside any of these bookstores or theatres, why not leave them alone?

Buck! You actually follow things like sports just to be accepted by a bunch of molty people? Ugh. I am usually a very watered-down version of myself at school, which means that everyone thinks I'm weird. They thought this long before I got into fandom anyway. I'm not going to go around giggling and talking about boys all the time, just so my peers will think me normal.

THE MIND BENDERS by Stableford? Funny; my copy says RIDERS. I thought Stableford's hero sounded like any of the umpteenth cool, inhuman private eyes on the tube, with his snappy answers and paperback wisdom about life. The book was OK, but could have been much better.

THINGS....gun control would have the advantage of making it harder for a guy who's just thinking about robbery because he needs the money to get a gun, and he might forget about it. It would prevent many accidents that occur with guns in the home, too. (Children can't help it if their parents are stupid and leave guns around.) But nobody seems to realize that gun control is just making it easier for the people who really want and need guns to scare others, because the others won't be able to get any. Anyone who thinks big organizations or criminals can't get guns when they want them, is nuts. About one-half the guns used by criminals are stolen anyway. How can gun control help that?

Illo on p. 18: very nice.

Buck, you being an(ugh) Western fan, have you ever read anything by someone named Zane Gray? The library has a whole shelf of his stuff. Max Brand also seems to be popular.

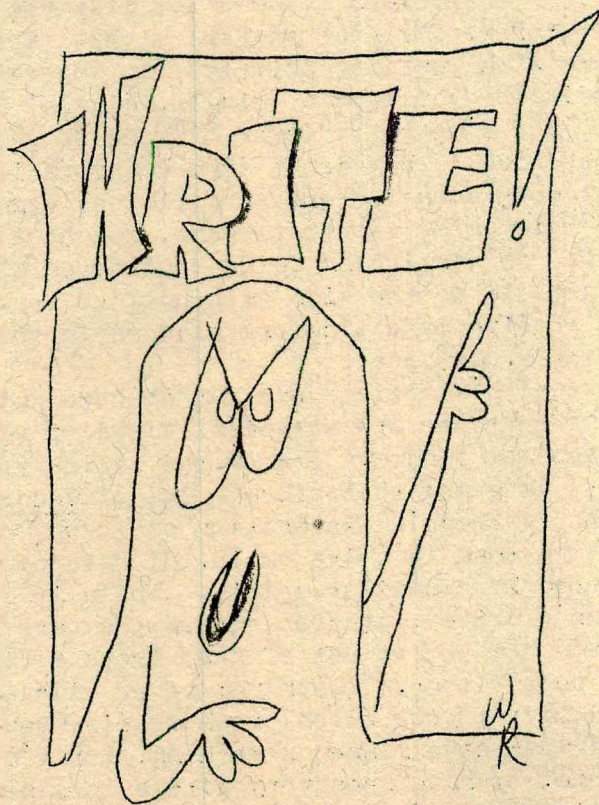
Grrrr. I too think the idea that gutsy writing just naturally is by males is a ridiculous one. It's amazing to see that many people still actually think femmes are the delicate as a rosebud type, concerned with feminine things; like we can't have real emotions or something. Sheesh.

Al Huyke: I disagree with your statements regarding fanzines. Few people can put out a wonderful first issue. Some can't even put out a wonderful 10th issue. Algo started out as a humble ditto zine, I believe. Yandro's roots come from a college newszine. Rune was just a clubzine when it started, I believe. The joy of fan pubbing should not be put off for years until someone is absolutely sure they will pub the best first ish ever. Because then they'll never publish it. So what if some of the crudzines stay crudzines? There is such a thing as lovable crud, you know. Communication is a big part of fandom, and fanzines are kinda like letters; do you go around telling your correspondents how to write their letters?

Unlike Anna, I wish "Golden Minutes" would never stop. It's as relaxing to read as a book of good cartoons. I hate to see those end.

Now Buck; Anna and I are perfect examples of neofandom, and I'll haver everyone know that we've been ~~treated~~ ~~by this type of a fanzine~~ threatened not once by nasty ole Buck Coulson. The most harmful thing you've done with your bullwhip, I'm sure, has been taking it away from one of the cats, who might have wanted to play with it.

[[Of course I follow sports just to be accepted by a bunch of "molty" people (one of whom is 26 and married and still indulges in the adolescent bit of the inane question followed by an idiotic laugh.) Well, not "just". I became addicted to basketball in high school (most Hoosiers of my age did, especially when they went to small schools). But the point is that you have to get along with your eb-workers,



whether you like them or not. Not doing so leads to altogether too much unpleasantness, and changing jobs is no help because the people aren't going to be any better at the next place. (You don't have to see them socially, even in a small town, but you have to get through 40 hours per week with them as painlessly as possible.) So I can talk football and baseball, though my interest in the first is moderate and the second non-existent. Basketball, I enjoy. // Zane Gray was a contemporary of Edgar Rice Burroughs, wrote about the same quality of garbage, and was equally popular. Max Brand is one of the pseudonyms of Frederick Faust, who was one of the most prolific hacks in history; he wrote mostly Westerns but a little of everything, including a few fantasies. He's not all that good either, but he's a little better than Gray. (He also wrote the "Dr. Kildare" books, which were made into movies, tv, etc.) RSC]]

Anna Schoppenhorst, 4621 East 16th Street, Indianapolis IN 46201

It took me a while to figure out what the cover of Y237 reminded me of. Finally it occurred to me. The cover of Y237 calls to mind a huckster. That first face has the sly smile, those shifty eyes, and the generally conniving expression that fandom's beloved ~~none/hunger~~ paraphernalia marketers show.

Another thing that impressed me about the cover was its intricacy. I've always had much admiration for people who create such works involving many, many tiny dots or lines, as this case may be (I also admire people who transfer said illustrations to the stencils. I can imagine poor Juanita bending over that lighted contraption of yours, patiently tracing each of those little lines for hours on end.)

Come now, Juanita, stained-glass chamber pots? I don't really think that folks who wish to return to the "simpler" life are victims of a martyr complex. There are people who wish to return to the 30s, and refer to them as "The Good Ol' Days". I fail to see how these people overlook little inconveniences such as the Depression, Prohibition, and other obstacles in the general public's road to freedom. People simply tend to delete the unpleasantries that occur with the good stuff, at least when reflecting back upon it, I guess.

Your co-workers sound a lot like the kids I got stuck with this year (and the next three, for that matter) at HS. But at least those that you are forced to associate with consider politics, in whatever manner. The big question at school right now is "Do you have a (giggle, giggle) Boyfriend?" My stock answers therefore are "No, but I've got a lover," "None of your goddam business," and "You ask personal questions." They don't seem to appreciate the humor in any of those replies. I fear that such matters as politics, economy and the like must take second place to The Homecoming (football game, not book) in their infinitesimally imbecilic minds.

Oh, on mentioning being considered slightly weird by co-workers, I've found a way to get all of the kids at school to leave me alone. I talk about fandom a lot. One can receive many sidelong glances in the halls, but at least they come from a respectable distance.

Jessica's article was rather cute and fairly entertaining, but I don't really think that her stereotypical views of various sorts of fen are all that applicable to general fandom. I know the byline you stuck on it (at her request, yes, I realize that) is going to confuse a lot of Yandro readers.

Larry Propp's explanation as to why cars tend to go out when certain people are driving them is quite valid. I have people who will back me up in saying that I am haunted by a similar spirit. While it doesn't afflict cars I am driving (seeing as I don't drive), it does attack the cars I'm riding in. Ask Mark. So far I've caused him to run out of gas, break a fuel line, and experience a flat tire. I also get people lost. (Warning: never ride any place with Anna Schoppenhorst unless you like having your blood pressure rise several degrees a minute.)

I must have missed something, for I'm not bored of hearing of Jessica's sex change. I have seen very little in zines about it, and practically nothing that Jessica herself has written. I only remember hearing about Jessica at all in the last four or five months.

I encountered many such people like Shakrallah Jabre describes his bookstore clerk

as. I guess all fen do, sometime or other. Most people just look at me strangely and say, "Sure you know the author of that book, Anna, sure you do."

Kay's letter sort of made me feel bad that I didn't get up at 5 a.m. to watch the Viking lander set down. I was terribly excited about the whole thing.

You are a depressing family for a neo to be acquainted with. As you well know, I've got my '48 Smith-Corona, on its last legs of the journey down the road of usefulness, and that's it. Nine typewriters. Nine of them. Gee. How do you manage to break keys from the machine? I bang on Patricia quite hard, and she hasn't broken that badly yet. (The asterisk-dash key has a tendency to disconnect itself from its slat when banged on too hard, but that is an infrequent happening.)

/As I recall, in my case grade school and junior high engendered utter loathing in me. But things improved a bit in high school, and I actually enjoyed my senior year. Not enough to make me sorry to leave, or nostalgic about it now, but it was bearable. Cheer up; things really do get better. Sometimes.//I don't break keys from typewriters. Bruce breaks keys from typewriters. I think it has something to do with the adolescent male. (Juanita will tell you that age has nothing to do with it, but pay no attention to her.)//Juanita also says she can't take credit for that particular cover, because it was electrostencilled.// And for the sharp-eyed readers, the switch from brackets to slants in setting off my reply this time is due to a switch from the IBM to my Royal typewriter; the Royal ain't got no brackets. The IBM is set up for most stencil-cutting, but we're finishing up a page here and there and didn't want to bother getting it out.7

THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE MAILBOX, Section II

The Franklin Library has a sequel to their previously reported offer of 100 (unnamed) Greatest Masterpieces of American Literature. Now they're offering "The Collected Stories of the World's Greatest Writers". In keeping with their successful tradition, they don't tell you the names of either the writers or the stories.//The editors of AMERICAN ANTIQUES may know antiques, but they certainly don't know math. In their recent promotion, they say "we have signed up over 15,000 subscribers", and then on another page they mention a survey of the readership and claim that "More than 980, or 35%, responded". I hope their bookkeeping for the IRS is better than that.//GARY ANDERSON sends a catalog from the U. of California, Santa Barbara Extension, plugging a non-technical course in relativity. It sounds lovely, but I'm not sure about that "non-technical" part. "Basic properties of a simple black hole" seems simple enough, but when they get into "How to draw a Penrose diagram for a charged black hole" and "Properties of the Kerr solution for a rotating black hole" I think they might lose me. But it sounds sciencefictional as all hell; other items covered are "Role-reversal of space and time", "Time machines", "Antigravity and negative universes", "The appearance of the sky during trips in and out of rotating black holes" (Kelly, are you with me?), "Exploding galaxies", and finish up with "The ultimate fate of the universe", which seems like an appropriate place to stop... DON & MAGGIE THOMPSON send a clipping of what to do if your elephant is constipated; Sahib, at the World Wildlife Safari, was given "15 boxes of Ex-Lax, 3 cases of apples, 2 cases of lettuce, 2 cases of carrots, 20 pounds of plums, 40 pounds of bananas, six gallons of mineral oil, and an enema administered with a garden hose". After two days, the regimen worked. I hope nobody was standing behind him... They also send a clipping, dateline London, about the Archbishop of Canterbury's determination to thwart a Danish film company from making, in England, a movie about the sex life of Jesus Christ. (Denmark, Sweden, and France have already refused permission to film there.) The whole thing strikes me as a bad joke, but I suppose if it's made, there are idiots who will go see it.//There's also a followup on the codebook for treatment of welfare patients. Now Ohio Welfare says that bills for welfare treatment are to be read by a machine instead of a person, and the machine can only read bills typed on specific typewriters and "acceptable" ribbons. So if a doctor doesn't have the right machine, he has to go out and buy a new one before he can handle welfare cases.

THE MACON FIND THE PROS PARTY

HEY! APRO
JUST FELL
IN THE POOL!!

IT'S OKAY.
HE SIGNED
MY BOOK WITH
WATERPROOF INK

WHO'S THE FLAKE
IN THE TUXEDO?

NEOFAN ROOM?
WHAT'S A
NEOFAN?

YOU BETTER
FIND IT
QUICK.

I JUST MADE
TWENTY BUCKS
IN QUARTERS.

HOW?

SHOOTING NAME TAGS
WITH MY LIGHT
PISTOL.

IF YOU WON'T
GIVE ME A
RIBBON, I'LL...
I'LL... I'LL
CUT MY
WRISTBAND!!



ARE YOU
A PRO?

SURE.

HEY, WOULD
YOU...

ALL RIGHT,
VICE SQUAD!
I'M TAKING
YOU IN!

WILL THE
DORSAI WHO
RUSHED THAT
CRASHER OFF
THE BUILDING
PLEASE APOLOGIZE?
I WAS HOLDING
MR. KELLER'S
WRISTBAND
FOR HIM.

LIVE from the
Sinking
of
Atlantis

GT LIGHT
PISTOLS
825.00
50.00
will u pay

I'VE HAD IT!
THIS WHOLE
THING IS A
FARCE! BLOOD!
DORSAI! WRIST
BANDS! I'M
LEAVING!

OH, HI, MR.
HEINLEIN,
ISN'T THIS
A GREAT CON?

Kill ANYONE WITH A BLINKY!